

Who is “The Porter” in John 10:3?

Clarifying the Teachings of Most Davidian Groups

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“But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.” John 10: 2, 3

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From the Beginning it Was Not So

In this study as with all other themes of salvation, it is never safe to start the study in the middle, or in a point of transition, but if we would arrive at the correct understanding, we ought to, like “civilized human beings,” start it at the very beginning. This principle we’ve learnt from Christ our Saviour, when He was questioned by the Pharisees on the subject of marriage and divorce. Here is how he handled that very sensitive topic: “The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?...They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but *from the beginning it was not so.*” Matt. 19: 3, 7, 8.

While the Pharisees appealed to a time some two thousand years removed from Eden, Christ took them back to Eden and helped them to see God’s original plan and intent in the marriage institution. It was not to be a fleeting moment of ecstasy but a life-long agreement between one man and one woman. In like manner, when treating on any subject in the Scriptures, we ought to go to the very beginning of the Creator’s design intent, and in this we have been given specific counsel in the message of *The Shepherd’s Rod*:

No one by beginning to study a subject *from the middle, backward or forward*, can learn its continuity and know what it is all about. If one is to learn the full truth of a subject, he must *study it in its entirety*. Dogs and cats, not civilized human beings, start eating the slice of pie from the center out. As intelligent human beings, as God’s people, we ought to eat the pie correctly.¹

With this foundation, my purpose in this article is to demonstrate that the role of “the Porter,” is not a human restricted office, but that “the Porter” in the fullest sense of the Word is a personal member of the Godhead. We will also see that there were human beings who acted the role of a porter, and indeed each sheepfold was so organized, but in each instance the sheep were never inspected by the porter, nor did the sheep follow the voice of the porter! Instead, they obeyed the voice of the Good Shepherd, and behind the Shepherd only did they follow. With this preamble let us now prayerfully explore the truth of “the Porter.”

Porters Throughout Old Testament History

Some believers have had mistaken notion that the porter is the “inspector at the door,” or merely a guard stationed at the entrance of the sheepfold, but as we will see, the Porter’s functions extend beyond merely standing as a watchman at the gate: “And the *watchman* saw another man running: and the watchman called unto *the porter*, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.” (2 Sam. 18: 26).

It is clear from this passage that “the watchman” and “the porter” are two different persons, and that the watchman depended on the discretion of the porter to determine the status, in this case, of the visitor. This fact is borne out in another passage which shows that the Porter is appointed by the king: “And the king appointed *the lord* on whose hand he leaned to *have the charge of the gate*: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.” (2 Kings 7: 17).

¹ VTH, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 3

This “lord” on whom the king depended to “have charge of the gate” is the porter. He is the king’s personal ambassador, and is answerable only to the king. When David had an errand to run, in that he needed to see the uncircumcised Philistine who cursed Israel and YHWH his God, he left his sheep in the safe keeping of the porter, the keeper of the gate, the one in charge while he (the shepherd) was absent from the flock. “And David rose up early in the morning, and *left the sheep with a keeper* [porter], and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.” (1 Sam. 17: 20).

This verse (1 Sam. 17: 20) is rendered more familiarly, in the following translations:

- (CEV) David obeyed his father. He got up early the next morning and left *someone else in charge* of the sheep; then he loaded the supplies and started off. He reached the army camp just as the soldiers were taking their places and shouting the battle cry.
- (DRB) David, therefore, arose in the morning, and *gave the charge of the flock to the keeper*: and went away loaded, as Isai had commanded him. And he came to the place of Magala, and to the army, which was going out to fight, and shouted for the battle.
- (GNB) David got up early the next morning, left *someone else in charge* of the sheep, took the food, and went as Jesse had told him to. He arrived at the camp just as the Israelites were going out to their battle line, shouting the war cry.

This “someone else in charge of the sheep,” is one who has as much care and interest in their wellbeing as the Shepherd, someone whom the shepherd trusts with the wellbeing of his flock. This concept is also shared in the *Rod*, for it teaches that, “The porter, *the one in charge*, opens the door only to those who have complied with the requirements for admission. In other words, the Lord is plainly telling us that *no one* may dodge the porter’s inspection and forever get by.”²²

Now this “keeper,” or “one in charge,” is an equal official to the chief shepherd himself, and as it with man, so it is with God, that he has left his sheepfold into the hands of a keeper with equal divine authority. It was David who once sang, “5 The LORD is thy *keeper*: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand... 8 The LORD shall preserve *thy going out* and thy *coming in* from this time forth, and even *for evermore*.” (Ps 121:5).

So we see here that YHWH is our “keeper,” or our porter, who watches our “going out” to pasture, and “coming in,” into the fold for shelter.

“And *the porters* were, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum was the chief; Who hitherto *waited in the king’s gate* eastward: they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi.” (1 Chron. 9: 17, 18).

As already stated, we again see that “the porters” were appointed by the king with strict charge of keeping the gate from intruders. It is a function carried out by many individuals, not simply one man. The porters were the equivalent of the Secret Service which guards and protects the US Presidency, and manages access to the President’s person.

²¹⁹ And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were *over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle*: and their fathers, being *over the host of the LORD*, were *keepers of the entry*.²⁰ And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the LORD was with him.²¹ And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was *porter of the door of the tabernacle* of the congregation.²² All these which were chosen to be *porters in the gates* were **two hundred and twelve**. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and *Samuel the seer*[prophet, 1 Sam. 9: 9] did ordain in their set office.²³ So they and their children had the *oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD*, namely, the house of the tabernacle, by wards.²⁴ *In four quarters* were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south.²⁵ And their brethren, which were in their villages, were to come after seven days from time to time with them.²⁶ For these Levites, the four chief *porters*, were in their set office, and were *over the chambers and treasures* of the house of God.²⁷ And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and the *opening thereof every morning pertained to them*.²⁸ And certain of them had the *charge of the ministering vessels*, that they should bring them in and out by tale.²⁹ Some of them also were appointed to *oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary*, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices.³⁰ And some of the sons of the priests *made the ointment of the spices*.³¹ And Mattithiah, one of the Levites, who was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the set *office over the things that were made in the pans*.³² And other of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were *over the shewbread, to prepare it every Sabbath*.³³ And

² V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 19, 20.

these are the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, who remaining in the chambers were free: for they were *employed in that work day and night.*³⁴ These chief fathers of the Levites were chief throughout their generations; these dwelt at Jerusalem.” (1 Chron. 9: 19-34); [added].

From the above passage, several facts stand out in bold relief as to the porters’ functions, responsibilities, roles and duties:

1. They were “*over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and ... were keepers of the entry*” to the city of Jerusalem (v. 19). This duty could not possibly be committed to “one person,” but to many, for it illustrated *omnipresence*, and *omniscience*.
2. That the office of porter was not restricted to one person, but to many, is easily seen in verse 22, where we read that the “*porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve.*”
3. We also note, with much interest that “*David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office,*” porters. So even while the living Spirit of Prophecy was manifested through Samuel, both he and king David saw the necessity of 212 “porters.”
4. That these porters had complete vision and complete knowledge of conditions on the ground, for they were stationed “*in four quarters*” (v. 24) around the city of Jerusalem—east, west, north and south!
5. The principal duty of these porters was to maintain the security and integrity of the gates, for “*the charge was upon them, and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them.*” (v. 27). To them was entrusted the safe-keeping of the gates and everything under their charge. In other words, these porters could not slumber or sleep, for theirs was a 24-hour assignment, quite reminiscent of YHWH Himself, of whom David wrote: “Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.⁵ The LORD is thy keeper [porter]:⁸ The LORD shall preserve [protect] thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.”(Ps 121:4, 5, 8); [added].
6. Verses 28 and following clearly demonstrate the depth of security which fell to the porter’s trust: they ensured the entire food supply was safe for human consumption, the instruments and utensils in the sanctuary were kept in the best condition, and were authentic, they ensured the sacred recipe for the showbread and incense were meticulously adhered to, and “they were employed in that work *day and night.*” (v.33).

“*And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door [porters], to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel.*”(2Ki 23:4.)

It is quite noticeable that the porters were “commanded” by the king. This point must be remembered, for as we will see in the gospels, the same pattern is followed from the type. Only that in the antitype, rather than having a human being as king, Christ presides and king, and rather than having a multitude of porters, there is only One—the *omnipresent* and *omniscient* Holy Spirit of Prophecy, who speaks not by himself but speaks only what he is so commanded: “*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear [is commanded], that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*” (Joh. 16:13); [added]. This point will be enlarged upon later.

Evidence that the porter function has not been restricted to *one* person, but to a multitude who were on simultaneous assignments, is now cited below:

- “*And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door.*”(2Kings 25:18, Jer. 52:24).
- And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, *keepers of the gates of the tabernacle*: and their fathers, being over the host of the LORD, were *keepers of the entry.*”(1Chron. 9:19).
- “⁵Moreover **four thousand** were *porters*; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith. ⁶ And David divided them into courses among *the sons of Levi*, namely, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.” (1 Chron. 23: 5, 6).
- “*And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king’s chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.*”(Esther 6:2).
- “*And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house.*”(Ezek. 40:45).
- “¹ Concerning the *divisions of the porters*: Of the Korahites was Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph...⁸ All these of the sons of Obededom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, were

threescore and two of Obededom...¹² Among these were the *divisions of the porters*, even among the *chief men*, having wards one against another, to minister in the house of the LORD.” (1 Chron. 26: 1, 8, 12).

“Porter: A gate-keeper #2Sa 18:26 2Ki 7:10 1Ch 9:21 2Ch 8:14 Of the Levites, 4,000 were appointed as porters by David #1Ch 23:5 who were arranged according to their families #1Ch 26:1-19 to *take charge of the doors and gates of the temple*. They were sometimes employed as musicians. #1Ch 15:16-18.”³

“PORTER: port, por'-ter: Port in the sense of gate (of a city or building) is obsolete in modern English, and even in the King James Version is found only in [Nehemiah 2:13](#). Porter, as gate-keeper, however, is still in some use, but porter now (but never in the English Versions of the Bible) generally means a burden-carrier. In the Old Testament, except in [2 Samuel 18:26](#) [2 Kings 7:10, 11](#), the porter (sho`er) is a sacred officer of the temple or tabernacle, belonging to a particular family of the Levites, with a share in the sacred dues ([Nehemiah 13:5](#); [Nehemiah 12:47](#)). The porters are mentioned only in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, and Chronicles has a special interest in them, *relating that their duties were settled as far back as the time of David (1 Chronicles 26:1-19), and that the office extended further to the first settlement of Palestine and even to Moses' day (1 Chronicles 9:17-26)*. The office was evidently one of some dignity, and the chief-porters ([1 Chronicles 9:26](#)) were important persons.”⁴

The above encyclopedic notes on this subject provide excellent historical background, certifying that the office of the porter originated as early as the times of Moses, while the first tabernacle (sanctuary) was being erected.

The Porter In Mark 13

“⁵ For the **Son of man** is as a man taking a far journey, who left **his house**, and gave authority to his **servants**, and to every man his work, and *commanded the porter to watch*. ⁵ Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: ⁶Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. ⁷ And what I say unto you I say unto *all*, Watch.” (Mark 13: 34-37).

In this parable we find the “Son of man”, Jesus Christ, taking a far journey, to His Father’s House in Heaven and left two sets of sentinels on duty to watch: (1) “His servants,” and (2) “the Porter.” But while “the servants” are many, “the porter” is only one person, by comparison. Further, this “porter” was set on duty since the Son of man “left” on his “far journey.” To be fair, we must ascertain the time of the Son of Man’s departure, and identify “the porter” He left in charge, as well as the “servants” that were also set in charge of “his house”—the church.

Since this parable in Mark 13 is similar to the ones in Matt. 25: 14-19, and Luke 19: 12-15, then the inspired interpretation of one will satisfy the basis for all.

“The “certain nobleman” in this parable is Christ, Himself, Who, *soon after His resurrection, departed to the heaven of heavens, “the far country,”* to be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. His ten *servants*, who are to occupy till His coming, *represent, manifestly, the ministry* at the closing of the gospel dispensation. And His citizens, accordingly, represent the laity -- the subjects of His kingdom. Together, then, His servants and His citizens make up His entire kingdom -- church.”⁵

With both Mark’s and Luke’s testimony before us, it is clear that “the Son of man” and “the certain nobleman” are one and the same person—Jesus Christ, Himself. Hence, “the far journey” and “the far country” also symbolize Heaven, and together “His servants” and the “ten servants,” manifestly, represent the ministry of His church in all ages, from the time He took his “far journey”—“soon after His resurrection.” All things being equal, then, we must be able to identify both the “servants” and “the porter” whom Christ left on duty at the time He started His “far journey,” some forty days after His resurrection. Just who could they be?

The servants we can immediately see represent the 12 apostles. “² Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had *given commandments unto the apostles* whom he had chosen: ³ To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being *seen of them forty days*, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: ⁴ And, being assembled together with them, *commanded them* that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me...⁸ But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come

³ Easton’s Bible Dictionary

⁴ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Porter.

⁵ VT Houteff, 1941, Mt. Sion At The Eleventh Hour, Tract 8, pp. 69, 70; italics added.

upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.⁹ And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.” Acts 1: 2-4, 8, 9.

It should now be incontrovertibly clear that the apostles are the initial servants that were left behind to manage the affairs of Christ’s kingdom in His absence. No, he did not leave the church in the hands of *one* such as Peter, James, Paul or John, but instead in the hands of all His appointed and anointed servants—the apostles. But beyond these there is *one* called “the porter,” that was also left on duty.

It is a founding doctrine of the Papacy to think that Christ left just *one* person, a sort of “chief bishop” or “Pope” in charge of His church! Any doctrine which manifests this one-man in charge theory is patterned after the Roman Papacy, and is, therefore, not of Christ. It was in the shadows of the last Passover when the disciples were jockeying for power and prominence that Christ rebuked them with this sermon:

“²⁴ And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. ²⁵ But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the *princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them*, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. ²⁶ But *it shall not be so among you*: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; ²⁷ And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: ²⁸ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Matt. 20: 24-28).

“But be not ye called Rabbi: for *one is your Master*, even Christ; and *all ye are brethren*.” (Matt. 23: 8).

Christ very roundly denounced the position of chief “Rabbi” amongst his disciples, teaching instead “all ye are brethren,” meaning they are in equal standing in his sight, none greater or smaller. The idea of a pope or chieftain, is not of Christ and should not be practiced amongst His disciples, for it is the spirit of the Gentiles—the spirit of the Evil One.

Who was the *only one* person that Christ could possibly have left on duty, when He left “His servants” behind and took His “far journey?” Clearly, since it was not a mortal person, we can only look to the godhead, and yes, he did leave on duty His Holy Spirit as the *only* door-keeper and watchman-supreme for the Divine sheepfold.

“¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that *he may abide with you forever*; ¹⁷ Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. ¹⁸*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*” (John 14: 16-18).

The “Comforter,” Christ’s personal ambassador, is the One whom He left on duty in His absence. This is also very clearly shown in Acts chapter 2, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and the Spirit was poured out on the waiting church in unwonted power and grace.

If the Porter of Mark 13 were a mere human being, let’s identify him upon Christ’s departure. We look and in vain we see that no human being fits this mold, and so it must only be recognized as one of the functional roles of the Holy Spirit in the gospel dispensation.

The Porter of John 10

“¹Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ²But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³To **Him** the *porter openeth*; and the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.⁴ And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice.⁵ And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.” John 10: 1-5

In the giving of this “parable” (v. 6), Jesus Christ made a number of points very clear:

1. There is a sheepfold
2. There is a door
3. There is a Shepherd
4. There are thieves and robbers

5. There are sheep
6. There is “the porter” (singular)
7. The sheep know and obey the Shepherd’s voice
8. The Shepherd calls His sheep by their name
9. The Shepherd leads the sheep out to pasture
10. The Shepherd goes before the sheep, hence they *follow* Him.
11. There are “strangers” masquerading themselves as the Shepherd, who are seeking a following, but the sheep “flee” when they hear “the voice of strangers.”

As is customary with all the parables, Christ has actually provided the meaning to His disciples, and this one is no exception, for “they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.” (John 10: 6). To better appreciate the lesson, let’s now pay the more earnest heed to His interpretation of the parable:

The Door: Christ has twice repeated “I am the door” (v. 7, 9) to the sheepfold, and all who enter through Him, shall be *saved*.

The Good Shepherd: Christ twice has repeated “I am the good Shepherd” (v. 11, 14).

“Jesus was the good shepherd to whom *the porter openeth*, who knows the sheep, calleth His own by name, and leadeth them out. *He it is who is stronger than the thief and the robber*, those who enter not in at the door, but climb up some other way...Christ presented Himself as the only one in whom were qualifications for making a good shepherd. He is represented as the ‘Chief Shepherd.’”⁶

It is of great importance to note that “the porter” opened the door for Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago, which fact solidly demonstrates that there was a porter in His days. This point will be enlarged upon throughout the rest of this document.

The Sheep: His sheep are those men and women, boys and girls, who *hear, believe and obey* his voice—the voice of the Good Shepherd—in a message of present truth. Thus He declared, “²⁶*ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep*, as I said unto you. ²⁷*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* ²⁸*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*” (John 10: 26-28).

The Sheepfold: Christ has demonstrated that the sheepfold, in a loose sense, is the body of true worshipers, thus he explained, “¹⁶*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*” (John 10: 16). The sheepfold in its strictest sense, is the church of the redeemed—the church triumphant. This church is completed after the judgment which ensures that it is free and purified from all defiling characters—spiritual wolves, goats, thieves, and robbers.

The Porter: Christ has declared that the porter *knows* the shepherd and stands to guard against the entry of strangers, thieves, and robbers, but will only let the true Shepherd into the sheepfold. As such, He will discern between sheep and goats, wolves and hirelings, and will not open the door to them, and as a result their only option for entrance into the sheepfold is to climb “up some other way”—scaling the fences, as it were! Therefore, the porter is a searcher of characters, and of the intents, and imaginations of the heart. He judges not merely from the outside, but *He sees the heart* of both shepherd and sheep! “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth not as man seeth*; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but *the LORD looketh on the heart.*” 1Sam. 16:7.

The Porter, then, is very acquainted with the true Shepherd and extremely discerning to keeping out false shepherds from ever entering through the door, for “He it is,” declares Inspiration, “who is *stronger than* the thief and the robber.” Let’s now see what Christ has said in this regard: “¹⁵*As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.*” (John 10: 15). The only conclusion admissible is that the Father and the Porter are one. Just as the Porter knows the Shepherd, so does the Father also know the Shepherd—His Son, and for this reason on the day of His baptism, the Father would open the door for His son into the divine sheepfold on this wise: “¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw *the Spirit of God descending like a dove*, and lighting *upon him*:¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” (Matt. 3: 16, 17).

⁶ E.G. White, *Signs of the Times*, Dec. 4, 1893; also in *Lift Him Up*, pp. 197-198.

The Porter is a Member of the Godhead

On that memorable day, and in this very demonstrable way, the proverbial "door" was opened to Jesus Christ, at which point He officially entered into the sheepfold. Mark this point with care: the Porter *knows* the Good Shepherd, and only opens the door to Him, and Him alone. Confirming this fact, *The Shepherd's Rod* message attests, "We should do well to discuss for a few minutes the qualifications which *a shepherd must have in order to pass the porter's inspection.*"⁷

Note carefully that it is the shepherd who must "pass the porter's inspection, with "must have" qualifications! There is no reason for the Shepherd to be standing at the door to the sheepfold, waiting on the Porter, rather, the Porter is always at the door *first*. As an axiom of logic, therefore, any purported "porter" who arrives at the door *after* the Shepherd has entered the sheepfold is an imposter! Since, also, the porter is the one who opens the door to the Shepherd, then the porter of necessity must precede him, must come before the shepherd, must be at the proverbial "door" first, and as the *one* who *inspects* to discern the difference between, the true shepherd, a sheep, a hireling, a thief, and robber, he must be one who looks not at *faces* but searches *hearts*. (1 Sam. 16: 7).

In our divided Davidian diaspora, a majority of *Rod* believers hold that the last "porter" to the Church was Brother Victor. T. Houteff. But this is the root of the problem, in and of itself, by placing a mere man--the Bulgarian from Rhodope mountains--in the office of the Holy Spirit, and so many have only seen "a man" as the porter, and can only accept a man as their porter. When those Davidians try to set both the "living" porter against the "dead" porter, it invariably results in a win for the living porter! Why? Let's hear from the Scriptures: "For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for *a living dog is better than a dead lion.*" (Eccl. 9: 4). This passage is literally stating that "a living dog is more to be feared than a dead lion!" Further, since "the dead know not anything," (Eccl. 9: 5), can you see the sheer futility of those who advance a "dead porter" in the face of a "living" one? The living porter is bound to win every time in such a contest. In practical terms, let's set a Chihuahua pup against a dead lion in battle and see which one wins every time in that contest! Go farther and set an ant in battle against a dead lion and see who wins the day. The ant, of course! So unless we understand from the Scriptures Who the porter really is, we will never be able to error-proof ourselves against imposters.

Let's follow closely the fact that it is the porter who *inspects* and lets the Shepherd into the sheepfold, and see where this logically places *him*, and in so doing, we will earn a greater appreciation for the phrase, "*the porter*" (the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is manifested).⁸ In 1929 when Brother Houteff was called to the prophetic office by the ever living Spirit of Prophecy, to announce *The Shepherd's Rod* message, Sister Ellen White had been dead for some 14 years, and there was no other living agent to so "confirm" Brother Houteff's mission.

If the porter is a mere human being, then we must be able to identify the inspired individual who passed on to him, as it were, the double portion of the Holy Spirit! But the disappointing reality is that there was *no living porter/ prophet/ shepherd* in the SDA Church at that time! Yes, since the sheep have been led to the Carmel *pasture*, there is evidence of a shepherd, which again propounds the question, which porter ("prophet" by Davidians' interpretation) *inspected* the shepherd (V.T. Houteff) who came with *The Shepherd's Rod*, to ensure that he was not a "wolf," a hireling, or a thief climbing up "some other way" to gain a following unto himself? Was it the General Conference who was "no longer the voice of God" to the people since 1903? Was it A.T. Jones or E.J. Waggoner who were already dead? Was it the General Conference President of the SDA Denomination? No matter how far and wide we look, the disturbing answer is clear, there were no living inspired mouthpiece, "porter," so trained and equipped for this mission at that time. At this point, it should become abundantly clear that *the only agent on duty* was the Holy Spirit—the Ever-living Spirit of Prophecy—Who was standing on duty at the door of the sheepfold and opened it to Heaven's chosen shepherd (V.T. Houteff), who came equipped with "meat in due season," and thereby led the sheep out to graze in the Carmel *pasture*.

Many *Rod*-believers hold tenaciously to this statement, as though it were the *last word* the prophet has made on the subject: "Only those who gain entrance through the Door and to whom 'the porter' (the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is manifested) opens are the authorized shepherds whose voices God's sheep hear."⁹

When coupled with this other statement, however, we find the whole truth of the Porter's being the Holy Spirit: "We should do well to discuss for a few minutes the qualifications which a shepherd must have in order to pass the porter's inspection."¹⁰

⁷ V.T. Houteff, 1953, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 22; italics added.

⁸ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 20.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

This latter statement illustrates that the “shepherd” *must pass* the porter’s inspection, in order to be qualified as a prophet over God’s sheepfold. The amazing truth of this statement has been overlooked by Davidians from the earliest times, and has given rise to the notion that there ought to always be “a man,” a human being, occupying the office of the Porter—Living Spirit of Prophecy. But from what has been revealed in this statement, the Porter is always the Holy Spirit, and when there is a resident prophet in the church the porter function is “manifested through” that prophet. Whenever the resident prophet is removed by death or even apostasy, then the porter function goes back to the Office work of the Holy Spirit. It is that simple!

The same is true for the Davidian president, for as the resident prophet, when alive he occupies that office (porter/president), but when dead, the presidency goes back to the Godhead, for “Christ is the head of His church,” and at various times He will *temporarily* place a human agent in that office as a prophet, to deliver a message and carry out the administrative affairs of His Church on earth, and in this capacity, the prophet is very loosely called “the porter.” Short of this timely manifestation of truth, however, the porter/presidency belongs to Christ, and goes back to Him when the living prophet’s work has expired.

What most Davidians today do not realize is that we do have a Living Porter and President in the persons of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit! The Deceiver has come around to offer us “a man” in the terms of a president and a porter, thereby robbing the godhead of their Office work, and exalting man to a level that God had never intended. This concept is what breeds cultism, and all Associations that uphold this erroneous teaching of a living porter/president, one who is not a member of the godhead, are indeed operating a full-blown cult! This is how Benjamin Roden, M.J. Bingham, Mervyn Jordan, and David Koresh, among countless others have all gained popularity within various sectors of the Davidian world, and what a sad trail of history is left in their wake!

“The last Porter/Prophet/President to God’s church today is, brother Victor T. Houteff.”¹¹

This statement is so false for its implications that it amounts to spiritualism, for it suggests that *a dead man* is standing at the door of the divine sheepfold to *inspect* all those who are being qualified to carry a Fellowship Card from that Association! This view is not unique to Mt. Dale, however, as the same understanding is shared by the Salem and Waco Associations, respectively. In sharp contrast to the Carmel Associations, the Bashan and Gilead Associations, hold that they have a living porter in the person of their group’s leader—the Living Spirit of Prophecy.

“After Brother Houteff, God’s servant and porter, passed away in 1955, the questions naturally asserted themselves, Did the role of the porter die with him? Was he the last porter? Why do we need a living porter? What is the porter’s work now? From all we have read in the Rod publications, however, the question is not whether there is a channel of communication today, but *who or what it is*.

“The role of *the porter could not die with Brother Houteff* because John 10: 3, Mark 13: 34, Luke 19: 14, Matthew 24: 45-47 (and kindred statements) disallow it. Since it is an *ongoing role*, Brother Houteff could not have been the last porter. The porter is *not a dead man*, nor is he the Holy Spirit, nor the Rod books, nor any other invention of the enemy. The porter must be a *living, inspired agent*, fulfilling the role of the man of John 10, Mark 13, Luke 19, Matthew 24 and kindred statements.”¹²

It will be seen that this porter function, as understood by these Associations, also carry out the office work of the antitypical David, for the statement cited Luke 19: 14, which says, “But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have *this man* to reign over us.” To this Scripture the Rod’s interpretation clearly states, “Clearly, then, before He is coronated, and prior to His return to reckon with His servants, He appoints a ‘man’ to reign over them in His stead. Whereupon they say to Him, by their attitude and stand toward His message, ‘We will not have *this man* to reign over us,’ although ‘this man,’ as we now see, is *the antitypical David* (the ‘simple means’), the visible king.”¹³

As clear as language can declare, the porter, in the minds of most Carmelite Davidians, is a synonymous term for “the prophet,” in this case V.T. Houteff, who is seen to be “the antitypical David”—the “visible king” of God’s kingdom! But, on account of Houteff’s death in 1955, the non-Carmelite Associations see this “porter” office up for grabs, and have made it a

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹¹ Mt. Carmel Center, Mountain Dale, NY, 2018, “List of Doctrinal Beliefs,” Supplement to the Application Blank for the Fellowship Card

¹² *Bashan Tidings*, Vol. 23, No. 3, November-December 2007, p. 18; italics added.

¹³ V.T. Houteff, 1942, *Mt. Sion At The Eleventh Hour*, p. 71; italics added.

permanent office for the head of their respective ministries! This is why M.T. Jordan has so elevated himself as "King David," and while the other "porters" are not so bold to overtly state their claim, they are all equally coveting the same role that is solely reserved for the godhead! This is how the spirit of the Papacy was formed—Satan aspiring to position his throne equal to or *above* the very throne of God!

"Christ points out that the only shepherds that He recognizes as His are those to whom the "porter" opens the Door and invites them in."¹⁴ Since Christ declared of Himself to be the Good Shepherd to whom the porter also opened (John 10: 9), then we must be able to identify "the porter" who opened the door for Him. Who was it that gave entry for Christ into the sheepfold? Clearly it was the Holy Spirit! John the Baptist was the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy was manifested in that day, yet the *confirming agency* of the Holy Spirit was seen and heard in the descending dove, and the sound of the Father's audible voice to the multitudes.

9And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. **10**And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and *the Spirit like a dove descending upon him*. **11**And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mark 1: 9-11.

Note carefully that this baptism ceremony was opened to all who had complied with the divine requirements for admission into the sheepfold, and there were many Pharisees and Sadducees who were pretending to be converted, and desired of John to be baptized. But the Spirit of Prophecy spoke through him declaring, "O generation of vipers [thieves, robbers, hirelings, false shepherds, and wolves in sheep's clothing, etc.], who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Matt. 3: 7, 8. They were not able to pass the Porter's inspection, and so were not granted legal entrance into the sheepfold. In short they were unfit to meet their King. Being the resident prophet, the Spirit of Prophecy was manifested through the Baptist, and in this temporary, yet very limited way, he could in this instance be called "the porter," through the Spirit, he was able to be a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the hearts of all who sought to be baptized for entrance into the divine sheepfold.

Similarly in our day, we see that many have come to feast on the wonderful *Shepherd's Rod* in Victor Houteff's days, and he made the following inspired remark as firmly as did John the Baptist over 1900 years earlier:

We dare not now, as Davidians, take unto ourselves its hallowed privilege until as a people our lives bear *convincing evidence of our repentance* from the Laodicean condition. The lesson in not authorizing this blessed service in our midst at this time, is inversely parallel to that which John the Baptist taught in ordaining and insisting upon the baptismal service then; that is, John's instituting the baptismal service then, showed that *the Jews were not ready to meet their King*, and the Rod's not instituting the communion service now, shows that **neither are we [Davidians] ready to meet our King**, and that we must therefore quickly *repent* from our lukewarmness, buy the "eyesalve," and anoint our eyes.¹⁵

To many Davidians, Brother Houteff is the "Master antitypical every prophet," which places a heavy burden on the mortal man, yet he himself has desperately sought to distance himself from these idolizers of mankind in this epic declaration: "I know that *it is not a Bulgarian* from the Rhodope Mountains who has made scholarly Americans scratch their heads. It is *not possible* that such a one could have shaken the Denomination from center to circumference. If you do not *know Who it actually is*, then you had better find out without delay."¹⁶

Both John The Baptist and Victor Houteff have heard from the same divine authority, the Holy Spirit, and both appealed to the would be adherents of their messages, pleading with them to "repent" and be converted, so they can be *ready to meet their King!* The porter-dodgers were summarily exposed, and should they gain entrance into the sheepfold "some other way" by scaling the fences, they will have to face the porter on their way out! That will be a moment for gnashing of teeth, for they will not be attired as sheep, and lacking the wedding garment), the shame of their nakedness will be revealed, exposing them as "thieves and robbers."

¹⁴ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 20.

¹⁵ VT. Houteff, 1944, *The Answer*, Book 5, pp. 39, 40; italics and [added].

¹⁶ V.T. Houteff, 1947, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No.17, 18, p. 21.

This statement clearly places the center of focus on Whom it belongs—the Godhead—and not on the man, Houteff, but even here he struggled to get his adherents to refocus their understanding of how Inspiration works, and even till this day there are many Davidians who are committed human idolizers.

“When we become children of God, our names are written in *the Lamb's book of life*, and they remain there until *the time of the investigative Judgment*. Then the name of every individual will be called, and his record examined by Him who declares, ‘I know thy works.’ If in that day it shall appear that *all our wicked deeds have not been fully repented of, our names will be blotted from the book of life*, and our sins will stand against us. If the professed believer becomes self-confident, if in word or spirit he breaks the least precept of God's holy law, he misrepresents Jesus, and in the Judgment the awful words will be spoken, ‘Blot out his name from the book of life; *he is a worker of iniquity*.’ But the Father pities the self-distrustful, God-fearing soul, harassed though he may be with doubts and temptations. Jesus pleads for him, and confesses his name before the Father and his holy angels.”¹⁷

This passage teaches how “goats” enter into the sheepfold—they profess faith in Messiah, pretend to be converted Christians, while their hearts are untouched by His grace. This class has a head knowledge of salvation, but no heart sanctification, they come simply to seek a following, or to carry out their own unsanctified ambitions, and only the “investigative judgment” will disclose the true sheep from the true goat. Hence we see that the porter examines the sheep to see of what manner character they are—sheep or goats. As only the members of the Godhead are in this investigative judgment, handing down the sentences on the heads of unrepentant sinners, it forces the conclusion from yet another angle, that the porter is bound to be the Holy Spirit. But those who are bent on worshipping man in the place of Christ, will teach and believe that the porter is a man who is enlightened by the Holy Spirit—the Living Spirit of Prophecy.

It is a *fundamental belief* among Seventh-day Adventists, that the Investigative judgment is God's accounting of our lives, reviewing the faithful records of the “recording angels” whose duty it is to minister to those who are heirs of salvation. In this arena, the Judgment considers no records of earthly beings, be they prophet, priest or king. It is only sufficient that the sheep confesses that he/she is a follower of Christ and seeks entry into the sheepfold via baptism. Were the records of man necessary for the judgment, then there would be *no need* for God to enact the judicial procedure called the Investigative Judgment, after the “investigation” has already been accomplished by his earthly “porters” throughout the ages!

Our brethren in Carmel are not aware how good a Bashanite they are until they stop to read what Bashan actually teaches, and if they should, would immediately see how much they need to be in that pasture, how much they are preparing themselves to be swallowed up by the “bulls of Bashan,” even giants in Davidia! Let's take a read from the Bashan “porter:”

It is here to be noted with all emphasis that this “servant” is, as the ROD emphatically states, God's LAST ONE. Then there is none after him. Automatically, therefore, *he is antitypical Elijah the prophet, antitypical Jezebel, antitypical Zerubbabel, antitypical Joshua, antitypical David—in toto, antitypical EVERY PROPHET*. Thus was V.T. Houteff.¹⁸

We can immediately see the confusion that every Bashanite and those who hold similar views with them, will confront when they realize that their “porter” is the antitypical David, while simultaneously teaching that V.T. Houteff is also “antitypical David!” These separate individuals cannot occupy the *same office*, still be commissioned by God, and so clearly exposes this doctrine as bogus! Below I shall quote from my ground-breaking article on *The Antitypical David*, in which God has exposed the depths of this error.

The Fall of Shintoism

The great danger with Laodicea during 1888 and yes, even today, has been, and continues to be because: “...Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family....The uplifted Saviour is to appear in His efficacious work as the Lamb slain, sitting upon the throne [of David], to dispense the priceless covenant blessings,...The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world

¹⁷ E.G. White, *Signs of the Times*, August 6, 1885 par. 17.

¹⁸ M.J. Bingham, *The Timely-Truth Educator*, 1990 ed, “The Servant” and “The Porter,” Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 7; uppercase emphasis in original.

should no longer say that [Davidian] Seventh-Day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.

“...the sinner can no more be saved than Peter could walk upon the water unless he kept his eyes fixed steadily upon Jesus. Now, it has been Satan’s determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the Church [Davidia] has been looking to man and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered.” TM 92.0-93.1.

The elect will realize that “God is everything, and the men of His appointment are only His *mouthpiece*.” 2 TG 27:7.1.

“It is a known fact that when people *give credit of a Divine deed to a finite human being*, then their hope of another as great, or greater ever coming to help them is forever gone. They do not believe that God lives, that He will raise another even greater to lead them further, but believe that there is no need of another and no need for more Truth.” 2 TG 26:16.4.

This type of attitude is called, “Shintoism and Non-Progressive Christianity.” “These two sins—trust in man [woman], and desire to exalt self—are still *the leading sin elements* now here on earth. This was Eve’s stumbling block and to many [Davidians] even today it is still the stumbling block.” 2 TG 28:13.5-14.0.

“My brethren, make your decision on the merits of the message, itself, rather than on Brother Houteff’s good or bad deeds...*Take your eyes off Brother Houteff and look unto Jesus through the message He sends...* Be a student of the message *instead of the messenger* as you are a student of the Bible, rather [than] a student of the prophets. This is your only safety against being bitterly disappointed in the end.” 3 SC 5&6:8.12-9.5.

“The credit for the message in ‘*The Shepherd’s Rod*’ Brother Houteff simply places it to Whom [Jesus] it belongs, and those who would like for Brother Houteff to *place it on himself are not doing it because they love him* or because they like to exalt him above themselves, but because they are sanctioning the claims of the voice from beneath which *hates God* and the revelation of the Word, *tempting Brother Houteff to exalt himself instead of God*, blindly deceiving themselves and leading others away from the truth, all because they hate to submit themselves under the rule of Christ now [the present time—1936 until Ezek. 9] while He is ‘taking the reins in His own hands.’—‘*Testimonies to Ministers.*’ 300. This class of workers Christ prophetically heard saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us’ (Lk. 19:14). For further explanation on this reference see the October, 1935, number of ‘*The symbolic Code*,’ p. 5.” 2 SC 3,4:12.1.¹⁹

Brother Houteff is singularly clear that the credit for *The Shepherd’s Rod* message does not originate with him, that he is merely the mouthpiece of the Godhead, and as such we should look to Christ through the message he brings and not to the frail Bulgarian.

John The Baptist, though a cousin to Jesus Christ, prior to the moment of baptism knew Him not! Thus he testified: “²⁰This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. ²¹ And I **knew him not**: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. ²² And John bare record, saying, *I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove*, and it abode upon him. ²³ And I **knew him not**: but *he that sent me* to baptize with water, the same said unto me, *Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him*, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. ²⁴ And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.” John 1: 30-34.

John, you see, gave credit to God—“He that sent me,” for his revelation of the Messiah, and so should we for the revelation of *The Shepherd’s Rod* message. In a very loose sense, John was the porter, who introduced the Shepherd, but even here we see

¹⁹ Garrick Augustus, January 1998, *The Antitypical David—The Beloved—Who Is He?* 12, 16; also found at: <http://www.heraldsoftheking.net/studies>

that “the porter” came *before* the Shepherd, *Y’shuah*, the Christ, and John the Baptist was called His “forerunner”²⁰. John did not show up on the scene *after* the Shepherd had entered into the sheepfold, but *before*! Hence, in the final analysis, the passage is abundantly clear that the Porter title belongs solely to “the Spirit” of YHWH, and not to any human being, and this is why the *Rod* would say of the porter, he is the one through whom *The Spirit of Prophecy* is manifested, for *The Spirit of Prophecy* is the Porter, as John himself also exclaimed. All so-called “porters” who are today appointed to stand at the door, are doing so *after* the shepherd has been allowed into the sheepfold, and as such exposes themselves as imposters! Never has the porter been stationed at the door *after* the shepherd has entered, for there would be no Divine purpose in it, as the sheep would already have been deceived by an interloper who entered while the door was unguarded. Further too, this is why “the porter” is singular, and not plural, for it represents One who ever lives to attend to “the door” of the sheepfold.

This concept was difficult for many Davidians to grasp, and God directed Brother Houteff to explain the subject of the *Messenger of the Covenant* so that we can all appreciate this divine mystery:

In the last analysis, however, the title *Messenger of the Covenant* *belongs to the Holy Spirit*. For example, 1 Peter 3:18-20 states that Christ preached to the antediluvians by the same “Spirit” Who “quickened” Him. But as He preached by the Spirit in the person of Noah, not of Himself, He thereby unfolded the truth that *the Holy Spirit is in all His messengers alike*. Thus “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Pet. 1:21. Briefly summarized, the term *Messenger of the Covenant* means the Holy Spirit (the invisible Christ) in Heaven’s visible representative--be it Moses, John, Christ, Elijah, or some other.²¹

It must be noted that “the porter,” as does the *Messenger of the Covenant*, opens the door of the sheepfold and lets the shepherd in. Since the shepherd travels with his sheep, then at the time the porter opens the door, both sheep and shepherd enter into the sheepfold, or out for green pasture. Hence, while the porter has an obligation to the Shepherd, the Shepherd has an obligation to the sheep, and the porter is a sort of middle-man who stands between the sheep and the Shepherd, in a sense He provides the sheep access to the Shepherd. At *no time*, however, do we see the *sheep following the porter*! The sheep *only* follows the Shepherd, never the porter, for the porter is *not* the shepherd. Anyone who professes to be “the porter” and develops a following of the sheep behind him or her, is *not* a safe guide, but is acting the role of a false shepherd and a hireling—a ranking imposter!

The porter has an obligation to the Shepherd, and the sheep have an obligation to the Shepherd. As stated before, and it is worthy of repetition, the porter’s only contact with the sheep is in the presence of the Shepherd, when they enter into the fold for shelter, or out to pasture for feeding, and in both instances, whether they are entering or leaving, the sheep are in company with the Shepherd, and not in company with “the porter.” The Porter’s job is to ensure that false shepherds do not enter the sheepfold disguising themselves as sheep, when in reality they wolves in sheep’s clothing.

The Porter In the Earthly Sanctuary

As the earthly Sanctuary was but a reflection of the heavenly, and the services in the earthly mirrored those in the heavenly, it is but to be expected that the office of the porter must of necessity find its counterpart in Heaven, as well. The Bible tells us in clear notes the following words: “And he set the porters at the gates of *the house of the LORD*, that none which was *unclean* in anything should enter in.” 2 Chron. 23: 19.

Here we see “porters” stationed at the gates of the House of worship—the Sanctuary. Now in the earthly Sanctuary there were several emblems, ceremonies and services, and we are told that “Through the teachings of the sacrificial service, Christ was to be uplifted before all nations, and all who would look to Him should live. Christ was *the foundation* of the Jewish economy. *The whole system* of types and symbols was a compacted prophecy of the gospel, a presentation in which were bound up the promises of redemption.”²²

“4 And I brought them into *the house of the LORD*, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaiah, a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, *the keeper of the door*.” (Jer. 35: 4).

²⁰ V.T. Houteff, 1932, *The Shepherd’s Rod*, Vol. 2, p. 243.

²¹ V.T. Houteff, 1944, *The Answerer*, Book 1, p. 79

²² E.G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 14.

Clearly then, the ancient temple—the house of YHWH—had an official serving as “the keeper of the door”—the porter. It is sufficient to observe at this point, that the entire sanctuary and all its services and officials have been summarily transferred to Heaven above. So it would be rather anachronistic to look for the office of the porter as an earthly official, when that entire system served only as a “shadow” of the heavenly Sanctuary and services, with heavenly beings and heavenly realities.

“We have yet to learn that the whole Jewish economy is a compacted prophecy of the gospel. It is *the gospel in figures*...Through all his teaching he scattered the precious grains of truth.²³

So far as it was of divine institution, *the entire system* of Judaism was a *compacted prophecy of the gospel*. To Christ “give all the prophets witness.” Acts 10:43...In every sacrifice Christ's death was shown. In every cloud of incense His righteousness ascended. By every jubilee trumpet His name was sounded. In the awful mystery of the holy of holies His glory dwelt.²⁴

“Jesus Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. He established the sacrificial offerings which typified himself. The whole system of types and symbols was one *compacted prophecy of the gospel, a presentation of Christianity*. Christ presented to the multitude of Jews and Gentiles of all nations *the real original truths connected with his kingdom*, which had been *buried out of sight*. He sought to clear away the *mist and fog of their false, long-cherished ideas* in regard to his mission and his kingdom.”²⁵

It is not without purpose that the above-cited quotations of truth from the Spirit of Prophecy have been presented, for the reader will note that there were many truths of the gospel that were “buried out of sight,” by the religious leaders of that day, which resulted in keeping the “mist and fog” of false doctrines prominent before the people and causing them to lose sight of the coming Messiah. In a similar way, when the message of Righteousness by Faith came the Adventist church in 1888, the Inspired testimony declared that, “Many had *lost sight of Jesus*. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family.”²⁶

When *The Shepherd's Rod* message is taught in such a manner as to leave out Christ from the core of its teachings, then Davidians are guilty of causing people to lose “sight of Jesus.” He is the center of our joy, the fullness of our salvation, the hope of our redemption, and He cannot be seen as a mere storied figure of history, but the One altogether beautiful, bearing the fullness of the Godhead bodily! Then shall we dwell on His righteousness more fully, and draw men to seeing Him, high and lifted up. When the woman was caught in the act of adultery and the Pharisees brought her to Christ, after he had asked a few challenging questions, all the while keeping His head down, He later lifted up his head and asked the accused, for her accusers:

“⁹ And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and *Jesus was left alone*, and the woman standing in the midst. ¹⁰ When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath *no man* condemned thee? 11 She said, *No man*, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” (John 8: 9- 11).

Observe carefully that “Jesus was left alone,” with the woman, and when He asked her “woman, where are those thine accusers?” She tremblingly “saw no man, save Jesus only.” (Matt. 17: 8). When we teach the precious message of truth, we ought to present “no man, save Jesus only!” This is what will swell the fainter cry of the 4th Angel’s message we now bear into the Loud Cry! Here is Inspiration’s counsel below:

When the Master sent forth the twelve on their first missionary journey, He enunciated the principle, “freely ye have received, freely give.” Matt. 10:8. He gave them *power* over the *power* of the enemy, over disease, and also *power* to preach the Gospel. And today it is just as necessary that we have these gifts as it was that the disciples had them. He says, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5; Vol. 5, p. 159. “I counsel you to tarry at Jerusalem, as did the early disciples, until, like them, you receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is not hard to see that in these days much of the missionary work done comes *far short* of exhibiting the *power* and character that attends this gift.”

²³ E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 21, 1899, par. 5.

²⁴ E.G. White, 1898, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 211, 212.

²⁵ E.W. White, *Review and Herald*, March 21, 1893 par. 3.

²⁶ E.G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 91.

A great many confine their missionary efforts to the propagation of the **doctrines and the prophecies** of the Message, while *Christ and the Gospel of salvation are either entirely left out, or are only occasionally mentioned as hardly more than matter of history*. The result is that to those who receive such a devitalized message, Christ has not become the Minister of circumcision of the heart (Rom. 15:8; Rom. 2:29), that the body of sin might be destroyed, and that henceforth they should not serve sin in the lusts thereof (Rom. 6:6-8). Such *emasculated missionary work is what brings tares into the church*, and of such work the Lord says: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." Matt. 23:15."

Every tree bears fruit after his kind; like begets like. A stream can rise no higher than its source. Likewise they who labor in God's vineyard can raise their converts no higher spiritually than they are themselves. This is a *very solemn thought*, and should lead us to deep searching of heart. When the message is preached by the arguments and wisdom of man without the power and demonstration of the Spirit (1 Cor. 1:17), the hearers of the Word, though intellectually convinced of the arguments, are *left unconverted to Christ*, with the result that Christ's salvation is useless to them, and that when He calls them, *they know not His Voice*.²⁷

The Holy Spirit is speaking to us in the above quotation of truth, and forcing each and every one of us Davidians who teach the *Rod* to examine ourselves to see if we are first converted to Christ, and if we are leading others to hearing His Voice! My experience has shown that to a great degree, the people are hearing the voice of man and not the Voice of Christ—let us speedily reform ourselves in this area, my friends.

Back to the point of the Porter in the earthly Sanctuary: Since that system was a compacted prophecy of the gospel, and further, since it all pointed to Christ, it would seem rather anachronistic that "the porter" function be handed off to someone that is *not* a member of the Godhead! As we survey the sanctuary we can readily see that the priest and high priest represent Christ, the laver of water represents Christ, the entire tabernacle represents Christ, the golden candlestick represents Christ, the table of showbread represents Christ, the altar of Incense represents Christ, the vail represents Christ, the mercy seat, represents God the Father, all the sacrifices represent Christ, and the porter who keeps the door is also a member of the Godhead—the Holy Spirit. I have established earlier that there were as many 4,000 porters at *the same time*, during the reign of king David, demonstrating that they typify the ubiquitous presence of God's Holy Spirit in the life of the church, and not the paltry endeavors of a mere confined human.

Ravenous Wolves In The Christian Sheepfold After the Apostles' Passing

In the parable of John 10, Christ spoke of "thieves and robbers" who are attempting to get into the sheepfold so as to get a following unto themselves, and thereby lead the sheep astray. Here is what the Spirit of Prophecy in Paul declared,

"²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. ³² And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (Acts. 20: 28-32).

"¹⁵ Beware of *false prophets* [false shepherds], which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ¹⁶ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matt. 7: 15, 16).

The same truth of the porter is here disclosed, because the wolves who pretend to be sheep in order to get into the sheepfold, get in because they pass human inspection. But none passes the Holy Spirit's (the Porter's) inspection to retain their names in the Lambs Book of Life, for not only are they inspected before entering the sheepfold, but more importantly, they are inspected upon exiting the same, and then they will be caught. This why many will remonstrate bitterly before our God, during the day of judgment and cleansing, because they climbed up some other way to gain an entrance into the sheepfold.

²⁷ V. T. Houteff, 1940, *The Symbolic Code* Vol. 6, Nos. 1-6, [January - June, 1940], pp. 14, 15.

“31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as **a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats**: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left... 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as **ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me**. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” (Matt. 25: 31-46).

The Davidian fellowship certificate is not a badge of perfection, but only a sign that one has been awakened by the present truth, enlightened to his spiritual poverty, and shows a willingness to comply with the requirements of God, but only the individual and His maker knows the state of the heart. Says the *Rod*:

“Many have asked who is eligible to lead in the service of the work? The answer that goes out from Mt. Carmel is that anyone not holding a Certificate of Fellowship cannot be a Davidian teacher. He can listen only. Yet just the *granting of a Certificate of Fellowship is a cheap thing. That in itself would have no significance.*”— *The Symbolic Code*, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 10.

There are sheep and goats who have been granted the Certificate of Fellowship over the years, and they have demonstrated by their lives that they were never converted to Christ, but only had an intellectual ascent to the truth without heart sanctification. Such ones, if they continue in that state of mind, will never pass the porter’s inspection on the day of reckoning for the Church. Similarly, those in the world who have not laid their on the altar of sacrifice, will likewise wail with gnashing of teeth, when they come up to the bar of judgment and fail the porter’s inspection. Both shepherds and sheep must avail themselves to the porter for inspection in the Judgment, and that’s where it really counts. A Davidian Certificate of Fellowship is no greater than a Baptismal Certificate in the SDA Church, neither of which ascribes the name of the holder into the Lamb’s Book of Life, thereby requiring the post screening process by the porter—the investigative judgment—of each entrant upon exiting the sheepfold of the church in preparation for acceptance and entrance into the purified kingdom.

As the characters are decided in the judgment, it again clears the truth that

Christ Reckons With His Servants Without Reckoning With The Porter

“34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to *his servants*, and to every man his work, and commanded *the porter* to watch. 35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: 36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” (Mark 13: 34-37).

When the Son of Man took His far journey shortly after His resurrection to Heaven above, he left two sets of watchers on duty: (1) the Porter (singular), and (2) “His servants,” (plural). It is remarkable to note, however, that upon His return to “Reckon with His servants,” the Son of Man does not “reckon with the Porter.” Let’s observe this same truth from another parable of His:

“¹⁴ For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods... ¹⁹ After a long time the *lord of those servants* cometh, and *reckoneth with them.*” (Matt. 25: 14, 19).

Note carefully that the reckoning was done *only* with the *servants*, leaving the porter as an untouchable! In other words, the Porter was above reproach and above being *reckoned* with. Who is such an unimpeachable One, who faithfully discharged his duty to “watch” till the Master cometh? There is no human institution that merits this impeccable reputation but a member of the Godhead who presided in Christ’s stead, since His departure to the “far country,” shortly after His resurrection. Truly the Holy Spirit has been and still remains today, the Porter on duty—the One in charge.

Were “the porter” a mere man, then he should have been the first to be reckoned with, for to him belongs the guardianship of the sheepfold, to ensure that “thieves and robbers,” wolves and goats do not enter in. But the silence on the Master’s not

reckoning with the porter speaks volumes in its deafening loudness. We must conclude that the porter is either above the rebuke of Christ, or that he had done such an impeccable job as to protect the sheepfold from all undesirable elements! But given the fact that both the wheat and tares have comingled in the church since Christ left on His far journey, coupled with the ravenous wolves who have helped themselves to the flock, we must conclude that there must be some accounting necessary of the Porter. But since He is not a mere human, but a member of the Godhead, it is enough for us to see that the sheep, shepherd's, thieves, robbers, wolves and goats must face the porter upon exiting the sheepfold! It is at this juncture that many will be noticed "without the wedding garment," and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The Porter of Ezekiel 9

We discovered from our previous studies that whereas the thieves and robbers may enter the sheepfold by climbing up some other way, in that they did not go through "the door," they cannot do so upon exiting, and must confront the porter upon exiting. It is at this point that they will be inspected to see if they possess the garments worthy of being called a sheep or a goat. It is the judgment (investigative) that describes the two classes, and those who did not invest the time to earn Christ's wedding garment—His spotless robe of righteousness, rather than faking their way into the sheepfold will have much to be concerned about, because they will not escape the searching eye of the Porter at the door, upon exit. Ezekiel also is a witness to this fact:

³ And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to **the threshold of the house**. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; ⁴ And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." Ezek. 9: 3, 4.

The "threshold of the house" is the entrance into the sheepfold, and there our God stands as the porter. From this position he gives orders to his church through the message of the Judgment for the Living. These verses constitute the first-phase of Ezekiel 9, and this phase has been made operational since 1929, at the call of Victor Houteff to the prophetic office by the Holy Spirit—the Porter. We can now see why he would say that "the chariot has arrived," because it contains "the glory of the Lord God of Israel," from whence He directs the work of the Elijah message through Heaven's "simple means."

The fact, therefore, that *from the chariot, the Lord commands the prophet to go speak*, bear the message, to His people, and that the message totals over 1250 pages of literature published *since 1930*, unfolding its truth from different angles, solemnly reveals that *the chariot ... has already arrived*.²⁸

From this we can clearly see that it is from "the chariot" that God "commands the prophet" to bear the message to Judah—the SDA church, and this is why Houteff stated that the Porter is the one through whom *The Spirit of Prophecy* is manifested—having known fully well that *The Spirit of Prophecy* is an equivalent name for the Holy Spirit. No human being IS *The Spirit of Prophecy*, and can only "have" *The Spirit of Prophecy*. Thus the Bible reports, "And I fell at his feet *to worship him*. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that **have** the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is *the spirit of prophecy*." (Rev. 19: 10).

I know that *it is not a Bulgarian* from the Rhodope Mountains who has made scholarly Americans scratch their heads. It is *not possible* that *such a one* could have shaken the Denomination from center to circumference. If you do not *know Who it actually is*, then you had better find out without delay.²⁹

Many Davidians, like John, are ready to worship the man who has the Spirit of Prophecy and have to be told, time and again, not to worship him, for the man is only the conduit for inspiration, and thus only *has* the testimony of Jesus which is *the Spirit of Prophecy*—the Spirit that resides in the prophets. This is what all the Bible writers understood it to be: "²⁰ Thou gavest also **thy good Spirit to instruct them**, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst... ³⁰ Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by **thy Spirit in thy prophets**: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands." (Neh. 9: 20, 30).

²⁸ V.T. Houteff, 1941, *Pre-Eleventh Hour Extra*, Tract 1, p. 37

²⁹ V.T. Houteff, 1947, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No.17, 18, p. 21.

Balaam's Donkey, King Saul, and The Porter

To many Davidians, the concept of the porter exhibits itself in “the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is manifested.” But as we will soon see, simply being the conduit for Inspiration is not a sufficient gauge of porter ship, for king Saul “prophesied” while on a very evil course, yet he was not regarded as a porter or prophet by Heaven.

“⁹ And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day. ¹⁰ And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and *the Spirit of God came upon him*, and he prophesied among them. ¹¹ And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, *he prophesied among the prophets*, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? *Is Saul also among the prophets?*” (1 Sam. 10: 9, 10).

Though Saul was here speaking under Inspiration, and thereby “prophesied,” he was not a faithful instrument in the hands of God, but was merely redirected from his mercenary deeds and was temporarily repurposed by the Spirit of God. No one would dare follow Saul’s counsel, his spontaneous “prophesying” notwithstanding!

“Then, too, there was the time when Balaam (who, at the instance of King Balak, was on his way to Moab) whipped his faithful ass, which thereupon received the gift of speech, and said to his abusive master: “What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?” Num. 22:28. *The dumb creature, we see, was enabled (inspired) to speak by the Power which created him.* Hence, it will be well, indeed for every man to give heed to what the Lord says and does regardless how, when, where, or through whom He says or does it.”³⁰

“From these and many other examples, we see that Inspiration works in diverse ways Its wonders to perform. Through *man* and through *beast*, in fact through all creation, Its work is seen in many forms...

“In all diligence, therefore, *give heed to any supernatural manifestation in the church of God*, irrespective of source, whether it be *human or brute*, small or great, black or white, rich or poor. Unbiasedly **compare its work with the Scriptures**, and if it is in harmony with them, if it finds its foundation and prediction there, makes men loyal to the law and to the prophets, and *adds light to the present truth*, accept it whatever the cost in money, property, position, friends, and relatives, for it is your very life. He who will prove faithful in this responsibility will receive a hundredfold for the sacrifice it has cost him to be true to the Lord’s voice (Matt. 19:29).³¹

Was There A Porter Before V.T. Houteff?

This question has caused many Davidians to go silent, for they are not able to clearly and honestly answer this question from the Bible or from the Golden Bowl. So let’s analyze it for its depth. To many of our people, the existence of a Porter prior to Brother V.T. Houteff is muted, for the sake that the “pastures” were not yet introduced into Christianity, but to this they are wrong, for they are failing to recognize that since Christ took his “far journey,” He left “the Porter” on duty to watch, along with his servants. All will readily agree that the first set of “servants” that were left on duty were the twelve disciples turned Apostles, save for Judas. But these servants were in effect prophets, as well as shepherds. This is clearly taught by the apostles themselves:

“² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³ Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” 1 Peter 5: 2-4.

Observe that the *feeding* of the flock of God is done by the *shepherds*. Such are pastors, prophets, bishops, apostles, etc. Never has the work of feeding the flock been directed to the *porter*, but only to shepherds, with Jesus Christ Himself being recognized as “the chief Shepherd.” Yet in each instance “the porter” was responsible for opening the sheepfold to the deserving

³⁰ *The Answerer* Book 1, pp. 43, 44.

³¹ *The Answerer* Book 1, pp. 45, 46.

shepherd. The below statement reveals that even Jesus Christ gained entrance to the sheepfold courtesy of “the porter”—the Holy Spirit. Let’s take a read:

“Jesus was the good shepherd to whom *the porter openeth*, who knows the sheep, calleth His own by name, and leadeth them out. *He it is who is stronger than the thief and the robber*, those who enter not in at the door, but climb up some other way.”³²

Clearly then, the existence of the porter before the days of V.T. Houteff is again confirmed by the Spirit of Truth, as in the above clear-cut statement. Further too, since all the Apostles were recipients of the Spirit of Prophecy (ones through whom the Spirit of Prophecy were manifested), if God wanted us to believe that they were “porters” he would have made it known, but to show the differentiation, Christ taught us that He left “servants” (plural) and “the porter” (singular), both were left on duty to “watch” till He Returns to personally take charge of the flock Himself. In the *Shepherd’s Rod* this shepherding concept is greatly developed to recognize that the shepherd is in fact a prophet, and not merely a pastor or inspired teacher. How do I know this? Because the *Rod* says so, with not less than three examples. Let’s analyze them closely:

“We should do well to discuss for a few minutes the **qualifications which a shepherd must have** in order to pass the porter's inspection. I may use a few illustrations, perhaps only **two or three**. You remember that there was a child by the name Samuel who early in life came to walk in "the Way," and therein he was trained. Now think on what happened: One night Samuel, you recall, was suddenly awakened by a Voice.”³³

We have already discussed the fact that the shepherd is inspected by the porter, and discovered that the one who does the inspecting is in a more superior position than the one being inspected. Hence the porter who inspected the son of Mary was in a more exalted spiritual position than was the Son of man at that stage of his existence. Who was this more *exalted* one? Could it have been John the Baptist? Let’s see: John, though the forerunner of Christ was *never* higher than He, for said the Baptist, “He must *increase*, but I must *decrease*.” (Joh 3:30). And when confronted by the Messiah in person, John sensed his unworthiness in the divine presence of his Lord and Saviour.

“13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, *I have need to be baptized of thee*, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.” (Matt. 3: 13-15).

Clearly, John recognized his dwarfed spiritual attainments in comparison to Y’shuah’s, and has left his testimony on record for future generations: “There cometh one *mightier* than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes *I am not worthy* to stoop down and unloose.” (Mark 1:7). Again he repeated his testimony on this wise, “there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is *preferred before me*, whose shoe’s latchet *I am not worthy* to unloose.” (Joh 1:26, 27).

From these citations, the evidence is clear that John was not in a more exalted spiritual condition than was Jesus Christ—the son of Mary. This leaves only one being to answer to this superior credential check—the Holy Spirit—Heaven’s *confirming* agency. We should recall that the Holy Spirit was the one Who *confirmed* Christ’s messiahship when He was baptized at the hands of John The Baptist based on the following account: “16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw *the Spirit of God descending like a dove*, and lighting upon him. 17 And lo *a voice from heaven*, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3: 16, 17).

In this case Christ was doubly *confirmed*, once by the Holy Spirit whose dove-like perch was seconded by the Father’s voice from on High. This was not the work of any man, but the person of the Godhead. Realize this too, that there were many people being baptized by John on that day, not only Christ, yet only He was *confirmed* by the Godhead.

Shepherd-1 Example:

In citing the “three” examples of shepherds who met the qualifications to “pass the porter’s inspection,” the *Rod* lighted first on Samuel. Hence we must here first recognize that Samuel was a shepherd, designated to feed the flock of God. But Samuel

³² E.G. White, *Signs of the Times*, Dec. 4, 1893; also in *Lift Him Up*, pp. 197-198.

³³ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 22.

lived some 1,100 years before Christ! This means that “the porter” in John 10:3 was actively inspecting the Shepherds even before Samuel’s days. *Mark this point with care!*

“9 (Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called *a Prophet* was beforetime called *a Seer*).… 19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, *I am the seer*. (1Sam. 9:9, 19). Here we see that shepherd Samuel was called by Heaven, “a prophet.” So How did “the porter” open the sheepfold to this shepherd—Samuel? The Bible informs us that Samuel heard the thrice repeated “Voice,” calling him in the night. It was the Voice of God—the Godhead—calling the young child to the ministry of the prophets—divine shepherding.

“Had Samuel not been as willing, as respectful, and patient as he was, do you think he would ever have come to hold *the highest office* in the land? -- Of course not. There was nothing else but the saintly qualifications of character which Samuel demonstrated that night that promoted him to the office of prophet, priest, and judge.”³⁴

Note carefully that Samuel was promoted to “the highest office.” What was this “office” called by the *Rod*? You answered correctly, a shepherd. So we see that Samuel was not a porter, though a prophet, he was a shepherd who successfully underwent “the porter’s inspection.” And who was “the porter” to Samuel? Again, the answer propounds like peals of loudest thunder—The Holy Spirit—or broadly speaking, a member of the Godhead.

“Do we still wonder *why Samuel was called out of bed three times* in succession and why he and Eli were disturbed in the night? -- For two reasons … (2) The Lord wanted to *help Eli*; He wanted to prevent the possibility of Eli’s concluding that Samuel was getting out of place and questioning his ability to discipline his own sons. Had Eli not been given *the opportunity to know for certain that the Lord talked to the child*, he then could have easily concluded that Samuel was conniving against the sons of Eli. But providential circumstances being as they were, Eli *certainly knew without doubt* that God had a message for him. There was *no room for doubt*.³⁵

Do not hastily read over the above paragraph, for it provides information on “the confirming agency” of the Holy Spirit, in the life and ministry of Eli. There was “no room for doubt” on Eli’s part that “the Lord talked to the child” Samuel. The one word that summarizes this thought is *confirmed*. Samuel was a *confirmed* prophet-shepherd in Israel, and Eli had absolutely *no doubt* about it.

Shepherd-2 Example:

We know well the story of David, the giant slayer, but we may not be quite familiar with the fact that David was one of Heaven’s shepherds who has successfully passed the screening of “the porter.” Too, we must also realize that David was “a prophet.”

“29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch **David**, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore *being a prophet*, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.” (Acts 2: 29, 30).

We have apostolic confirmation that David was a prophet of God. Hence it is a Biblical truth that God’s shepherds are also prophets!

“Ancient David also was a young boy and nothing more than a common shepherd. But he was a good shepherd, the best in the land. *God saw* that he was mindful of and faithful to his duties, and so **He determined to make the boy a king** over His people.”³⁶

It was not Israel’s choice that made David a king, rather it was the work and ministry of “the porter”—a member of the Godhead, hence the Rod would say that God had “determined to make the boy *a king* over His people.” Not that kings are shepherds, but “prophets” are, and such was David.

³⁴ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 23.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 24.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 24.

“7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but *the LORD looketh on the heart*... 11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. 12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And *the LORD said, Arise, anoint him*: for this is he. 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and *the Spirit of the LORD came upon David* from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.” (1 Sam. 16: 7, 11-13).

Let it not escape your notice that the election of David was solely the prerogative of Heaven, and that he was *confirmed* by the Holy Spirit at his anointing, for YHWH “looketh on the heart.” It is also helpful to see that “the porter” was on duty some 1,025 years before Christ’s day, and even longer before Brother Houteff’s days. So, yes, the porter has been *active* in the life of the church from the earliest of times, and He uses whom He chooses as prophets, and makes them shepherds of His flock.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: *who can know it?*” Jer 17:9. Since no human can declare what is in the heart of man, yet the porter who inspects is the *Searcher of hearts*, this adds proof to the chain of facts that the porter is not, cannot and has not been a human being.

Shepherd-3 Example:

The final example cited in the Rod is breathtaking, for it looks on Joseph, one of the patriarchs of Israel, who lived some 1,925 years before Christ, and even much longer, by nearly 4,000 years before Brother Houteff. Yet, as we will see below, “the porter” inspected Joseph! Who was that porter?

“I am thinking of another boy, a young boy in his teens -- Joseph. *The Lord saw something in him* that He could not find in Joseph’s brothers. Not only was he his father’s favorite son, but he was God’s favorite, too. *God had in mind something great for Joseph* -- greater than the world could ever think of.”³⁷

We recall that God called Joseph, even while he was a child, just as He called Samuel, and David, all in their youth. God gave to Joseph many dreams, and the ability to also interpret them. Joseph passed “the porter’s inspection and was heralded by heaven as a shepherd to His flock.

It is a well-known fact that Joseph was not only a Shepherd of God’s “little flock,” but he was also a prophet, for he prophesied based on his and Pharaoh’s dreams of future events in the life of Israel and Egypt and they all came to pass. And of Joseph, Jacob would give this moving summary:

“22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: 23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: 24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by **the hands of the mighty God of Jacob**; (from thence is *the shepherd, the stone of Israel*)” (Gen. 49: 22-24).

Joseph would become the progenitor for the Chief Shepherd of Israel—the Rock (stone)—upon which the church of God is built. Clearly, from the information provided in Scripture and *testimony*, we can see that “the porter” who inspected Joseph was a member of the Godhead. From these three examples we can now make the broad and *confirming* statement as an axiom of Scripture, that “the porter,” was and always shall remain as a member of the Godhead, and in a specific way, we can adduce that “the porter” is the Holy Spirit of Prophecy.

It is marvelous to note that of all the examples he could have cited in Scripture, the Holy Spirit directed Brother Houteff to feature these three individuals one of whom lived nearly two thousand years before Christ was born, and all of whom met the qualifications for “the porter’s inspection” in their day! Yet, when many Davidians today are asked: “Was there a porter before Brother Houteff?” They stumble at an answer, and more often than not, from their ignorance, exclaim “no.”

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 25

A Brief Look at the Call of the Davidian President

That the office of the porter transcends all true claimants to the office of shepherd/prophet, is clearly displayed in the manner in which the *Rod* describes the call of the Davidian President, as opposed to all other officers that are “appointed” by the people. Contrary to the reasoning of some that it takes a President to appoint another, this is not a teaching of The Shepherd’s Rod—voice of God—to the “little flock,” at any time in history. Others have cited examples in the call of Joshua to the leadership role of Israel on the borders of the Promised Land as an example of this prior president’s electing his successor, so it is well that we dwell on this concept for just a moment:

“1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that **the LORD spake unto Joshua** the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, saying, 2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore *arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people*, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.” (Josh. 1: 1, 2).

From this text we can clearly see that the Most High, YHWH, was the one Who elected Joshua to the prophetic office, and it was *confirmed* by the Holy Spirit through Moses. *“Joshua was selected of God to be Moses’ successor* in leading the Hebrew host to the promised land. He was most solemnly consecrated to the future important work of leading, as *a faithful shepherd*, the people of Israel. ‘And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him. And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.’ And he gave Joshua charge before all the congregation of Israel, ‘Be strong and of a good courage; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel unto the land which I sware unto them; and I will be with thee.’ *He spoke to Joshua in God’s stead.*”³⁸

But using this erroneous precept that “it takes a President to appoint his successor,” we can quickly see how this unravels itself by simply asking the important question: “who was the President that appointed Moses?” Instantly this fog is evaporated in the face of the inspirational authority of the Scriptures, for *none* laid hands on Moses to carry out his sacred office save for the Most High God—*Yahweh*. How do we know this? Because the Bible tells us so:

“1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. 2 And *the angel of the LORD appeared unto him* in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed... 4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, *God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses*. And he said, *Here am I.*” (Ex. 3: 1-4).

Moses was called, you see, at the direct command of God, and he responded as did the child Samuel “Here am I.” (1Sam. 3:4). There was not the shadow of another human being in the direct presence of Moses, nor even within close proximity, so as to confuse the Voice of YHWH to the Shepherd of Midian, only the Voice of the Godhead did he solemnly hear on that never-to-be-forgotten day. This is how all God’s prophets are called, by the direct Voice of God. So with all this said, how is the Davidian Shepherd/prophet called? Let’s consult the *Constitution* of this Organization.

“ARTICLE IV--OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES: Section 1. (a) The *regular* officers of this Association shall be a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. (b) The president shall be *called and chosen* in accordance with the procedure set forth in Exodus, chapter three, verses ten, fifteen, and sixteen; chapter four, verse seventeen; **Ezekiel, chapter three, verse seventeen;** and Luke, chapter six, verse thirteen.”³⁹

Let me produce only one of the several Bible passages that Heaven has directed in electing the President of this Organization, at it bears in common with all the other verses cited by Inspiration, the truth that the President is *called and chosen by God*, similar to all the Bible prophets. “Son of man, *I have made thee a watchman* unto the house of Israel: therefore *hear the word at my mouth*, and give them warning from me.” (Ezek. 3: 17).

Many theories abound about the use of the word “regular” in describing the officers of this Association, but none bear the truth as it is in Jesus. They all are designed to prepare a vacant throne for a self-appointed shepherd to the Davidian sheepfold who, failing to meet the qualifications for “the porter’s inspection” “climbeth up some other way,” (John 10: 1), than entering through the Door.

³⁸ E.G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, p. 335.1; italics added.

³⁹ V.T. Houteff, 1942, *The Leviticus of D.S.D.A.*, pp. 5, 6.

While it may appear logical to define the word “regular” as “usual, normal, and customary,” we must be consistent with our understanding and not cause the prophet to appear confused and confusing, for he not only used the word “regular” in this instance, but with regard to *sessions*, as well:

“ARTICLE V—SESSIONS: Section 1. This Association shall hold *regular* sessions at such time and place as the Executive Council shall designate by a notice published in The Symbolic Code, the official organ of the organization, in two consecutive issues before the date of the opening of the session. Section 2: (a) Special sessions may be called in the same manner in which a *regular* session is called. (b) The decisions at special sessions shall have the same force as those at *regular* sessions.”⁴⁰

It is sufficient to note that throughout the entire history of Mount Carmel Center, and under the leadership of Brother Victor T. Houteff, there has never been even *one* session, let alone many, yet the word “regular” is used to describe “sessions.” So the logic that the word “regular” with respect to the office of the presidency, translates to the normal operation of the ministry, then it must apply with equal force to the sessions of said ministry! Yet, we look with disappointment to find the historical records of just *one* of Mount Carmel’s *regular* sessions, and cannot find it, for she never had even *one*!

It is not only the Davidian President that is called and chosen by God, but even the ministers are so called, not to be prophets, but as under shepherds over God’s “little flock.”

“ARTICLE III--ORDINATION OF MINISTERS: Section 1. (a) The Davidian Seventh-day Adventists shall recognize only the Scriptural law of ordination, to wit: (1) that *the call to the gospel ministry must come from God to the individual*, and that (2) it must be followed in strict fidelity to the requirements of gospel order.”⁴¹

From this we can see that the porter—the Godhead—calls the minister to his post of duty, and the Executive Council, being men and women set in charge of the ministry “between sessions,” shall “authorize recognition of his calling to engage in the sacred work of the ministry,”⁴² and confer upon *the called one* the rights, duties and privileges of ordination, through the laying on of hands ceremony. So to be a 100%-Rod-only believing Davidian, one must, *at the least*, accept the authority of the Davidian Constitutional order and governance, or else be considered by Heaven as an *unauthorized shepherd*. Over and again we have demonstrated that the office of “the porter,” belongs to the Godhead and manifests itself most generally through the Office of the Holy Spirit.

Davidians’ Stumbling Block

As clearly as the above treatment on “the porter” has been, there are many Davidians who strain at the gnat of “sentence reading,” and convince themselves and others that “the porter” is a man. Let’s examine that stumbling block before we close:

“Only those who gain entrance through the Door and to whom “the porter” (*the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is manifested*) opens are **the authorized shepherds** whose voices God’s sheep hear. All such shepherds call the sheep by name: They are well acquainted with their flocks because they are intensely interested in them, and they carefully *lead them in and out*.”⁴³

Observe that “the porter” is a manifestation of “The Spirit of Prophecy,” hence it is beneficial for us to clearly and correctly identify this agent—*The Spirit of Prophecy*.

To many Davidians and nominal Adventists alike, *The Spirit of Prophecy* is variously understood to be, the Inspired interpretations of the Scriptures—books, the writings of Sister Ellen G. White, Sister White’s writings plus the Rod’s, Sister White’s writings plus the Rod’s plus the various *living porters* writings of today (Bashan’s, Gilead’s, and Branch’s), Sister White, a prophet, someone who has the Holy Spirit living within him/her, and still others hold that it is the Bible. But are any of these voices correctly representing this sacred office of the Holy Spirit? I say without equivocation, no. So what then is *The Spirit of Prophecy*? For this answer we turn to “the golden bowl” of truth.

⁴⁰ V.T. Houteff, 1942, *The Leviticus of D.S.D.A.*, p. 7.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 8

⁴³ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 20.

^{“9} And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. ¹⁰ And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that *have* the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is *the Spirit of prophecy.*” (Rev. 19: 9, 10).

With our eyes trained on verse 10, let's recast it again, this time with the explanation embedded: “I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that *have the Spirit of prophecy.*” Who was this “fellow servant?” ^{“8} And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to *worship before the feet of the angel* which shewed me these things. ^{“9} Then saith he unto me, *See thou do it not:* for I am *thy fellow servant*, and of thy brethren *the prophets*, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.” (Rev. 22: 8, 9).

“As the apostle beheld the final deliverance of the church, he was carried away with the glory of the scene and *with deep reverence and awe fell at the feet of the angel to worship him.* The heavenly messenger instantly raised him up and gently *reproved him*, saying, ‘See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’”⁴⁴

There are many today who manifestly are prepared to give the glory of God unto men or angels, and John ostensibly fell in this trap of the enemy's. But no matter how sincere in our convictions to the claimant of Inspiration, worship belongs *only* to YHWH. And even good angels are below being worshipped, even though they are sinless beings, for they do not possess life in themselves. The record of John should stand as a standing rebuke to any other worshipful being in the universe of God, yet, there are professed Christians, who, today, are still ignorant of this precept and are bent on worshipping men! But should the most enlightened Christians in our world today—Davidians—stoop to this level of sacrilege, that would truly be an abomination.

Reviewing the passage in Rev. 19: 10, we see that the “fellow-servant” was *not* the Spirit of prophecy, nor was he “the testimony of Jesus,” but instead he “had” this gift. Further, the angel informed John that he too was a prophet, and as such is not deserving of worship. This passage should make abundantly clear that the Spirit of Prophecy is not a human being, even though the human agent can be *indwelt* by this Being—the Holy Spirit. When this ministry of the Spirit causes the receiver to declare the *testimony of Jesus*—prophesy, then it is that the person is regarded as a prophet. So to be clear, then, the Spirit of prophecy is another name for God's Holy Spirit as an agent who prophesies. We should do well in noting that the word in this sacred name is “Spirit.” Man is flesh, and not *spirit*, and therefore cannot be logically called “the *Spirit of prophecy*,” or “living” *Spirit of prophecy*, or even “ever-living” *Spirit of prophecy*. Since humans are not “ever-living,” this leading descriptor should be sufficient to call attention to those beings that are perpetual in their existence.

^{“7} But *the manifestation of the Spirit* is given to every man to profit withal. ^{“8} For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; ^{“9} To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; ^{“10} To another the working of miracles; to another *prophecy*; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.” 1 Cor. 12: 7-10.

So then, a believer possessing the gift of wisdom, s/he is said to have “the Spirit of Wisdom,” one possessing knowledge, we say s/he has “the Spirit of knowledge,” and likewise, one possessing the gift of *prophecy*, is declared have “*the Spirit of prophecy.*” It is from this understanding that Nehemiah would early say, “^{“20} Thou gavest also *thy good Spirit to instruct them* ... ^{“30} and testifiedst against them by *thy Spirit in thy prophets.*” (Neh. 9: 20, 30). Nehemiah might well have said, “and testifiedst against them by *thy Spirit of prophecy*,” without any loss to Inspired thought being conveyed.

With this point established, we should do well in contemplating a few choice statements from the *Rod*, in its use and definition of this ubiquitous Agent—the *Spirit of prophecy*.

“Then, too, it alone has the testimony of Jesus Christ -- the *living Spirit of Prophecy in its midst* (Rev. 19:10), -- ***the Spirit Who leads into all Truth***, Who alone can rightly interpret the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:20, 21).” *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 2, No. 34, p. 20.

⁴⁴ E.G. White, 1882, *Early Writings*, pp. 230, 331

“Obviously, the remnant are those who are left after the earth opens her mouth and swallows up the flood. They as a body keep the commandments of God, and have *the living Spirit of Prophecy, the Spirit Who dictated the Scriptures*, Who has led God's people into all Truth down through the ages, and Who still is.”⁴⁵

“Throughout these pages, *the Spirit of Prophecy* has, by the prophetic Word, proved Itself invulnerable to attack. It has vindicated Itself not as a voice beginning with Moses and ending before John the Baptist, but as *the ever-living testimony, beginning with creation* and continuing with the patriarchs Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac Jacob; then with the prophets; next with the apostles; and finally, with the messengers of the Lord in our own day and on.”⁴⁶

We see here that even before Adam, the Spirit of Prophecy existed *at the Creation* of our planet home—earth.

“How can this marvelous provision for man's redemption be communicated to him? By what process, in what way, can God now talk to and instruct those who can no longer see Him or have direct converse with Him? This problem could never have been solved by man. Its solution belonged to Him whose wisdom and whose provisions are infinite. He alone knew how to make Himself, together with His divine purposes, known to man separated from Him by sin. Here is the method that was devised: 'If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will *make Myself known unto him* in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.' Num. 12:6.

“This is a divine *method of communication*,—a method chosen and declared and used by the Lord Himself. It is a vital, inseparable part of the plan of redemption. It is a divinely designated means by which God's messages are to come to the human family. *Through all time* the Lord would, in this way, communicate with men. It was *an abiding provision*. What amazing condescension! He who was so grievously wronged by man established a plan for a clear, reliable revelation of Himself to a world in active, determined rebellion against Him!

“O wondrous provision, whereby Adam, although an exile in the land of sin, might still receive the Father's messages of love and forgiveness, and be made to understand the plan of salvation for a world plunged into sin by his willful act of disobedience! O wondrous provision, whereby messages from the throne of God have been transmitted to men in all ages, and whereby are brought even to us, 'upon whom the ends of the world are come,' divine assurances, yea, and evidences, of the complete and imminent triumph of the plan of redemption!”⁴⁷

“This most expressive and significant statement of the early bestowal and continuance of the prophetic gift was repeated by the apostle Peter, who declared that God “*bath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*” Acts 3:21. This prophetic gift bestowed was to abide with the church from Adam to the second advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when He comes to take His redeemed people to Paradise. It did not cease with the apostles, but is traceable through the centuries to the last days of human history, just before the return of our Lord.”⁴⁸

“This is exactly why prophecy cannot be privately interpreted, not without *the Spirit Who dictated the prophecies* to holy men of old. So, then, the prophecies are not interpreted by the will of men, but by *the Spirit of Truth, 'the Spirit of Prophecy,'* the *same Spirit that dictated the prophecies.* This, you see, is *not my idea.* It is the plain language of the Bible.”⁴⁹

“² For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was **no [true] shepherd.** ³ Mine anger was kindled against the [false] shepherds, and I **punished the goats:** for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.” (Zech. 10: 2, 3).

From this passage we see that the false shepherds and “the goats,” are identical terms for each other, and both of them received the frown of Heaven, because God's “anger was kindled against” them. It is rather revealing to note that the porter is the one Who saw these two characters, as well. Let us hear from the Rod's plain testimony on this thought: “God's sheep are thus carefully led in and out, both to shelter and to ‘meat in due season,’ to present Truth. *The 'goats,'* though, *those who dodge the*

⁴⁵ V.T. Houteff, 1947, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 2, No. 16, p. 22.

⁴⁶ V.T. Houteff, 1942, *Why Perish*, Tract 6, pp. 46, 47.

⁴⁷ *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*, AG. Daniells, 1936, pp. 21, 22.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴⁹ V.T. Houteff, 1948, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 2, No. 24, p.16.

porter while entering, must, of course, do so while coming out, too. Consequently, they cannot be led by God's appointed shepherds.”⁵⁰

Clearly, “the goats” are false shepherds who are *porter-dodgers*, that have climbed into the sheepfold by “some other way,” and have obtained a following, all pawning themselves off as shepherds, when in every way they are false guides. They are, perhaps, not aware that they will have to pass the porter’s inspection upon exiting the sheepfold, and at that time their unqualified garments will be exposed, as in the parable: “¹¹ And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: ¹² And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither *not having a wedding garment?* And he was speechless. ¹³ Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matt. 22: 11-14).

The separation of the *dressed* from the *undressed* by “the king,” is clear evidence that the porter is not a mere human being, but Deity itself! For while man may judge from all the external appearances, of this porter, the Bible says, “he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: ⁴ But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. ⁵ And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and *faithfulness* the girdle of his reins.” (Isa. 11: 3-5).

Since the “judge” here mentioned is Jesus Christ, in His glorified form, this passage stands as a clear reminder that the porter of prophecy is a Searcher of hearts. “*The Holy Spirit* comes to the world as Christ’s representative. It not only speaks the truth, but It is the truth--the faithful and true Witness. *It is the great Searcher of hearts* and is acquainted with the characters of all.”⁵¹

“The great Searcher of hearts knoweth every sin committed *in secret* by the workers of iniquity...But He will detect their hypocrisy and will open before others those sins which they were so careful to hide.”⁵²

“The *Searcher of hearts* weighs the motives, and often deeds highly applauded by men are recorded by Him as springing from selfishness and base hypocrisy. Every act of our lives, whether excellent and praiseworthy, or deserving of censure, is *judged by the Searcher of hearts* according to the motives which prompted it.”⁵³

“The Searcher of hearts *inspects* motives, and often the deeds which are highly applauded by men are recorded by Him as springing from selfish motives and base hypocrisy. Every act of our lives, whether excellent and praiseworthy or deserving of censure, is judged by the Searcher of hearts according to the motives which prompted it.”⁵⁴

Observer that the one who “inspects” the saints is called “the Searcher of hearts.” This work is not given to any human being! “Every good and every wrong act, and its influence upon others, is traced out by the Searcher of hearts, *to whom every secret is revealed*. And the reward will be according to the motives which prompted the action.”⁵⁵

When asked if there was a Porter before Brother Houteff’s days, many Davidians respond with a clear “no,” preferring that the nature of the pastures was not yet present truth, therefore eliminating the need for “the porter” before his days. But this is not consistent with the Bible, for as we have already explored from the Scriptures, that the porter has been active for thousands of years before V.T. Houteff’s arrival! And even now, through the *Spirit of Prophecy*, Sister White would say, “Christ is the door to the fold of God. Through this door all His children, *from the earliest times*, have found entrance.”⁵⁶

Now let’s observe that all God’s “children, from the earliest times” found entrance to the sheepfold through the Door. If this be true, and it is, then there had to have been a porter guarding the door, *inspecting* both shepherd and sheep. Read it again and realize that the expression, “from the earliest times,” stretches the concept as far back as the days of Eden. This is how Adam entered the sheepfold, and this is how all his descendants have ever entered, by passing the *inspection* of the porter—the Holy Spirit, and this is how his sheep and appointed shepherds today do.

⁵⁰ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 21

⁵¹ E.G. White, 1913, *Counsels to Teachers Parents and Students*, p. 68.1; italics added.

⁵² E.G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. p. 211.3-212.1; italics added.

⁵³ E.G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 275.3; italics added.

⁵⁴ E.G. White, 1870, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, pp. 511, 512, also in {1MCP 348.5}; italics added.

⁵⁵ E.G. White, *Maranatha*, p. 312.5; italics added.

⁵⁶ E.G. White, 1898, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 478.

We know that the Porter is Deity from yet another angle, a fact clearly stated in the parable; let's go treasure hunting: “¹¹ I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. ¹² But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. ¹³ The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. ¹⁵ As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.” (John 10: 12-15, 29).

In this passage, observe carefully that Christ is here restating the ideas of verses 1-4, and in so doing He has now provided an expanded understanding, or interpretation, as to the meaning of the parable. Note carefully that He presents Himself as “the Good Shepherd,” in contrast to the “hireling” and “the wolf.” Now the only person who can spare the sheep from the “hireling” and “the wolf” is “the porter” who *from the earliest of times* has been stationed to guard the sheepfold, thereby granting access to Heaven’s deserving shepherds, while leaving the thieves to scale the fences, thus gaining access by “some other way,” than through “the Door.” Further, Christ lighted on one additional truth: after again identifying Himself as the “good Shepherd,” He invokes *how* He gained access to the Sheepfold—“the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.” (v. 14). The purpose of declaring the Father’s knowledge of him as Heaven’s appointed Shepherd, is to demonstrate that “*the Porter*” only opens the sheepfold to those whom He knows. Language can make it no clearer than Christ’s declaring Himself as “the door,” to the sheepfold and “the Good Shepherd,” while He unequivocally declared “the Father” as “the porter.”

“³⁷ All that *the Father giveth me* shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out... ⁴⁴ No man can come to me, except *the Father which hath sent me draw him*: and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath *learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*” (John 6: 37, 44, 45).

Note the emphasis which Christ place don “the Father” as the one who grants permission to (draws) the sheep to enter the door of salvation in His Son. “*My Father, which gave them me*, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” (John. 10: 29). It is the office of Deity to call sinners to salvation, and Christ has not been silent to this truth. Never has He authorized an earthling to this divine office of portership, but reserves it solely for the office work of *the Spirit of Prophecy*. Hence, while someone like John the Baptist can be a conduit of the Porter, he was *never* the porter, similarly with Sister White or Brother Houteff, they were mere vessels through whom *the porter* manifested Himself. But let us not for a moment confuses the Holy Spirit of Prophecy for a mere mortal, that is blasphemy!

“2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him [the shepherd] the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out... 11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” John 10: 2, 3, 11.

Here is unmistakable language, Jesus Christ advertised Himself as the “shepherd” of the sheep, and announced that the porter “opened” the portals of the divine sheepfold to Him. But rather than leaving us to surmise whether or not the porter was John the Baptist, at that time, Inspiration has further admonished: “Christ is both the door and the shepherd. He enters in *by Himself*. It is through His own sacrifice that He becomes the shepherd of the sheep.”⁵⁷

Clearly, since the porter is the one to open the sheepfold to the shepherd, and Christ entered the sheepfold “by himself” without being labeled “a thief,” it is evident that at that time, Christ, being a member of Godhead was authorized by the Holy Spirit—the Porter, to enter the sheepfold, and that is why Inspiration has stated that “He enters [the sheepfold] by Himself,” being the door.

A sobering question for all Davidian Present Truth believers to ask and answer to their souls satisfaction is this: “Since V.T. Houteff’s death in 1955, who has been the porter (Porter) to inspect both the Davidian shepherds and sheep?” Is it possible that for the past 60-plus years, there has not been a gatekeeper to the Davidian sheepfold? Forbid the thought! This is the surest way that we know Who the actual Porter is, for God has never left his sheep to be wholly dependent on man, but has made provision, through the Holy Spirit to be his representative (another comforter) in His absence. But seeing this vacant office, there are many office-seekers whom have sought to occupy that spot, and the Davidian world is littered with them—all of whom are aspiring to the very seat of Christ, as a sort of Davidian Pope in the Divine sheepfold.

⁵⁷ E.G. White, 1898, *The Desire of Ages*, 478.3.

Since we now know that the porter is able to discern between sheep, shepherd, and goats, and that he *inspects* (qualifies) the shepherds while disqualifying the thieves, hirelings, and wolves, it becomes a trivial matter to acknowledge that this is not the work of mortals, but one reserved only to Him who knows the thoughts and the innermost desires of all humans, and as such is the only qualified One to bring condemnation or commendation in the judgment—He is the great *Searcher of hearts*. Yet, in spite of what we have already covered, there are professed Davidian teachers who hold to a completely different foundation, even though they represent themselves as 100%-Rod-Only Davidians. Let's take a read below:

Some question why there must be a living porter. The simple answer is, because the Bible shows us there must be, and because, very obviously, there must be *someone* living to bind up the testimony and thereby to *inspect* and let in the shepherds and the sheep *since Brother Houteff's departure*. He is not here to do so. Without another to do so, *none can become accredited shepherds* and *none* accepted sheep respectively to lead and to be led in for shelter and out for green pasture.⁵⁸

Although the author of the above-statement declares that “the Bible shows us there must be” a human-porter today, in the wake of Brother Houteff’s deathⁱ, yet we have brought forth an abundance of evidence herein, which teach a completely different lesson, and this lesson can only be seen and appreciated when the Bible is read from a purely redemptive perspective. This is made plainer when we consider the earthly Sanctuary and realize that this was a “compacted prophecy of the gospel,” a presentation of the Ministry of the Godhead in the salvation of mankind. A quick glance will see priests, high priests, sacrifices, laver, candlestick, table of showbread, altar of incense, mercy seat, vail, shekinah, lamb, and porter, etc. All of these objects were representations of *heavenly realities*. Yet, even while we attribute every office in the Sanctuary to the Godhead, and know that this ministration is conducted in Heaven, yet this self-serving office of *the porter* is somehow, by the human porter notion, restricted to an earthly function, and not an heavenly one. This is not consistent with Holy Writ, as is shown below:

¹ Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty *in the heavens*; ² A minister of the sanctuary, and of *the true tabernacle*, which the Lord pitched, and not man. ³ For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. ⁴ For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: ⁵ Who serve unto *the example and shadow of heavenly things*, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to *the pattern shewed to thee in the mount*.” (Heb. 8: 1-5).

To miss the truth that the earthly sanctuary was “the example and *shadow* of heavenly things, is to miss the heart of “the everlasting Gospel” of salvation! To repeat, since all the offices, officers, functions, duties, sacrifices, and services were “the example and shadow of heavenly things,” where then, in heaven, is the reality of *the porter*? Why is *the porter* function still resident on earth while all other related sanctuary functions have been transported to Heaven above? Who or what does *the porter* of the earthly sanctuary typify? We can find the reality of the sacrifices, the laver, the priests and high priests, the vail, the mercy seat, the shekinah, the alter of incense, and the door, all in Jesus Christ, yet there are many Davidians who stumble at the porter, thus making Him an earthly fixture in the church! But every lesson in the earthly sanctuary sees the porter as a *heavenly* being, even the Holy Spirit, the *inspector* supreme, of every person connected with the Sanctuary.

We have over and again proven that the one who “inspects” the saints is not a mere human bring, no matter how knowledgeable in the Bible and “present truth,” but attaches to the Office of the Holy Spirit, specifically, and to the Godhead, generally, but *never* to a human being, post Calvary. Of this Spirit of Prophecy, the Bible declares, “And he that *searcheth the hearts* knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Rom. 8: 27. We see there that another name for the Holy Spirit of God is “He that searcheth the hearts.” This work has never been extended to humans, and is the prerogative of Deity only!

Another area of the Davidian stumbling block is the simple word “one” in the expression “the *one* through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is manifested.” Because of the singularity of the numbering of the porter, this statement is suggestive that no “two or more” individuals can be the porter, simultaneously, for it says “the *one*.” So to better understand what we are dealing with here, it is helpful that we clarify the word “manifested,” as herein used.

Manifested: Because the *Rod* teaches that the porter is “the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is *manifested*”—“the one in charge,” some Davidians have made much of this singularity in usage, and claimed that the word “manifested,” in the

⁵⁸ M.J. Bingham, 1967, *The Servant and the Porter*, 1990 ed, p. 21; italics added.

statement means the authorized inspired agent (Living Spirit of Prophecy) who stands to guard the sheepfold from false sheep and false shepherds alike.

“Can’t you see that the spirit which is now manifesting itself through these Truth-hating brethren is the very spirit which manifested itself through the Jews, and through the enemies of Truth during the Protestant reformation, and also in the beginning of the 1844 movement?”⁵⁹

Check this out: *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*: [<http://www.whiteestate.org/books/agp/AGPTOC.HTML#Sect One>] or <http://www.whiteestate.org/books/agp/AGPc02.html>

“10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ which was in them* did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” (1 Peter 1: 10, 11).

Here the Bible tells us that the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is manifested, is an identical term to declare the prophets exhibited “the Spirit of Christ which was in them.” The key component here then is “the Spirit of Christ, and not the human agent.

“He that overcometh’ being **the one** who is to ‘rule’ ‘the nations’ ‘with a rod of iron,’ and the need and the work of overcoming being not His but *His followers*’, the truth is obvious that the Lord will have *a victorious nation -- a kingdom* through which He will *manifest* His great power, and which shall be *A Kingdom of Peace*.⁶⁰

Here we see that “the one” here referenced is “a victorious nation—a kingdom through which he will *manifest* His great power”—the ever-living Spirit of Prophecy. This was manifested, you see, not through “one man” but an entire nation, a kingdom!

“Christ is both the door and the shepherd. He enters in by Himself. It is through His own sacrifice that He becomes the shepherd of the sheep. “To Him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice.” {DA 478.3}

The Porter’s Work In The Sanctuary

The work of the porter as guardian to the tabernacles, cannot be overlooked, because he was the general overseer in matters pertaining to the preparation of the incense, which is the prayers of the saints.

“The Spirit of God has much to do with acceptable prayer. He softens the heart; He enlightens the mind, enabling it to discern its own wants; He quickens our desires, causing us to hunger and thirst after righteousness; He intercedes in behalf of the sincere suppliant. The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And *He that searcheth the heart* knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.’ (Romans 8:26).” {8MR 195.4}

The Chargé D'affaires—“The One in Charge”

Some present truth believers have often seen this “one in charge,” as the head of the Association—the president, but a careful look at the statement will quickly dismiss this view.

“The porter, *the one in charge*, opens the door only to those who have complied with the requirements for admission. In other words, the Lord is plainly telling us that *no one* may dodge the porter’s inspection and forever get by.”⁶¹

⁵⁹ *Jezreel Letter*, No. 2, p. 7

⁶⁰ V.T. Houteff, *Mt. Sion At The Eleventh Hour*, Tract 8, pp. 64, 65.

⁶¹ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 19, 20.

Since the porter is “the one in charge,” and “no one” can forever escape his inspection, this immediately harkens to a being possessing complete vision, and one above all, who reads hearts and not faces! Since this function belongs only to Deity, we are again challenged to ask the rhetorical question: “Which human being can see the heart of mankind to so completely separate the sheep from the goats in the church, or in the Association?” To suggest that Victor Houteff once occupied this office, is to say nothing, for he married a woman, who, thought apparent to him was a sheep, has unraveled before the world to be the most offending goat in the Davidian sheepfold! Brother Houteff defended his marriage to this maiden on several occasions, against the wise counsel and criticisms of many of his most strident adherents! Yet being blind to the secrets of her heart, the love of his life became the antagonist of *The Shepherd's Rod* message in the world!

In his closing years, the ailing prophet could only prepare the sheepfold to “brace for impact,” as he saw through the eyes of the porter, that the Davidian ship was headed for head-on collision with an iceberg in the way!

“Everything that can be done against God's message of today will be done with even a greater vengeance than was manifest against Heaven's message in the days of Christ's first advent, for the Devil knows that if he loses now, he loses forever -- that he is to have no other chance. Unparalleled, therefore, is the urgency that every eleventh-hour church member now quickly and solidly *brace* himself against the Enemy's effort to deliver a knockout blow. We must be alert, too, to realize that the blow is to come from surprisingly unsuspected *foes* -- from professed *friends* of the gospel, who are no less pious than were *priests* in Christ's day.”⁶²

Even till today, many Rod believers hold that this “blow” came from Florence Houteff and her executive council, but even here that conclusion is rather hasty, for it overlooks the many others who were involved during and after those times. Clearly this run-away train started with the leadership of the Davidians who were all warring for power and control. Individuals such as Roden, the Houteff, the Bingham, Zumstein, Bashand, were all “friends of the gospel work” who occupied the equivalent office of the “priests in Christ's day.” These persons and their helpers have individually played their roles to aid in the “blow” and the confusion which followed in its aftermath. And even though apparently well-intentioned in aiding in the gathering of the faithful Nathaniels against Florence's false prediction of the purification of the church in 1959, we see that Brother Bingham, for example, took full advantage of the implosion in Davidian leadership, and has gathered the scattered sheep of Carmel around himself, while promoting himself to the office of *the Porter*. Throughout this work, we have demonstrated that this office (porter) belongs only to Deity, the Godhead, and has *never* been transferred to man.

The need for a “one man” system is foisted by some who find traction for their ideas in the parable of the *faithful and wise servant*, in the hopes that this “servant” (singular) is representative of “one man” who is so delegated to give “meat in due season” to the Church of the living God. Let's examine the passage under consideration:

“45 Who then is a faithful and wise **servant**, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed is that **servant**, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make **him** ruler over all his goods. 48 But and if that *evil servant* shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite his fellow **servants**, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that **servant** shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt. 24: 45-51).

The view that holds that the “faithful and wise *servant*” is *one person*, then to be consistent ought also to teach that the “evil servant” (singular), is also representative of *one person*. This being the case, according to that logic, then we may conclude that there is only *one* evil servant—tare—in the world-wide body of believers in the Third Angel's Message! If we are not willing to admit this far, then we can immediately see the absurdity of this doctrine. The truth of the matter is that these two classes of servants—a wise and an evil (foolish)—who are more forcibly presented as two classes of saints—“wise virgins” and “foolish virgins,” as in (Matt. 25: 1-13). Further, the passage also teaches that the wise servant who became discouraged and complained that his “lord delayeth his coming,” and started to eat and drink with the drunken, is from the same wise servant class, who had now grown weary of their long wait, and became careless in their spiritual trusteeship. For one to miss this vital context of the teachings of Christ in an effort to promote self, or a one-man rulership of the world-church, is to miss the essence of the Gospel entirely!

⁶² V.T. Houteff, 1951, *The White-House Recruiter*, p. 33.

“The ‘servant’ (singular) that shall ‘begin to smite his fellow servants’ (plural) signifies the *leadership* -- the ‘angel’ of the church of the Laodiceans -- those who *have charge of the ‘household.’* But the ‘servants’ (plural) apply to the ministry [ministers/pastors] under that leadership. By the unfaithfulness of ‘*that servant*,’ the gospel has been delayed; the generation is about to pass, and the work is years behind.”⁶³

“If no one is to know the day and hour until the Lord comes then *how could this servant be aware of the day and the hour?* Do you see that one statement seems to contradict the other? No one knows the hour, the day. Therefore, *God's people must be ready for the event to occur* at almost any time; and if this servant does not *faithfully perform his duties*, then when the Lord is about to come *that servant will not be aware of it.* Is that not how you understand these two statements? Up to a certain time God's people do not know the day and the hour, but *if they continue to receive meat in due season a day will come when this servant is going to be made aware of that hour, of that day.*”⁶⁴

We must never make the mistake to think that “meat in due season” comes solely from one person, but as has been true throughout church history, can also be derived from a deeper understanding of the messages already given to date, and this is why we are counseled that, “New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to *him* who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful *seeker for truth* will find *precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God.* Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God.”⁶⁵

“If we would have the light that has been provided for us, we should show our desire for it by diligently searching the word of God. Precious *truths that have long been in obscurity* are to be revealed in a light that will make manifest their sacred worth; for *God will glorify His word*, that it may appear in a light in which we have *never before beheld it.*”⁶⁶

“The question is asked by Christ, “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household?” [Matthew 24:45.] Jesus asks, “Who?” and *every minister of the gospel* should repeat the question to his own heart. As he views the solemn truths, and his mind beholds the picture drawn of the faithful and wise steward, his soul should be stirred to the very depths. {GW92 15.2}

Our Need to Depend on the Finality of the Bible

“To begin with, is it not correct that *the Christian's textbook* is the Bible? If your answer to this fundamental question is in the affirmative, then it compels us to study Sister White's writings in the light of the Bible, not the Bible in the light of her writings. This, in fact, she herself plainly says:

“Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures, and who have received the love of the truth, will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the Bible testimony [not by hers], these will detect the deceiver in his disguise.... Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible, and the Bible only?”--The Great Controversy, p. 625.

“Clearly, therefore, her work must never be interpreted in such a way as to contradict the Bible but always to clear it. If you undeviatingly follow this absolute rule of interpretation, you can never possibly have any trouble with the Rod or with any message the Lord may ever send.” *The Answerer*, Book 1, pp. 22, 23.

“Although the doctrine of the Kingdom may not appear quite so complete under the lens of Sister White's writings as under the lens of the Rod, one dare not thus superficially reject either, but must the more studiously compare both views of the doctrine under the super-lens of the Bible. He must keep in mind that *we are not given license to harmonize the Bible with any other writings, but are charged to measure all others by It.* First of all, in order to do justice to the Scriptures, to Sister White's writings, and to the Rod the position of each on the subject must be viewed in the light of the Scriptures, which incontrovertibly teach that the Promised Land will be re-inhabited by the Lord's own converted people. (See Isaiah 2; Micah 4; Ezekiel 36, 37; Jeremiah 31-33).” *The Answerer*, Book 2, pp. 74, 75.

⁶³ V.T. Houteff, 1932, *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 2, p. 179; italics and [added].

⁶⁴ V.T. Houteff, *Symbolic Code*, Vol. 11, No. 12, p. 7.

⁶⁵ E.G. White, 1892, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 34; also in {CW 35.1}.

⁶⁶ E.G. White, 1892, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 25.1

“In all diligence, therefore, give heed to any supernatural manifestation in the church of God, irrespective of source, whether it be human or brute, small or great, black or white, rich or poor. Unbiasedly compare its work with the Scriptures, and if it is in harmony with them, if it finds its foundation and prediction there, makes men loyal to the law and to the prophets, and adds light to the present truth, accept it whatever the cost in money, property, position, friends, and relatives, for it is your very life. He who will prove faithful in this responsibility will receive a hundredfold for the sacrifice it has cost him to be true to the Lord's voice (Matt. 19:29).” *The Answerer* Book 1, p. 46.

“The Protestant Movements were raised up to declare and to exploit the primacy of the Bible, because the pre-reformation world was bound in darkness by uninspired man's religious rule, disallowing the common people the right to possess a Bible, and making them dependent upon his private interpretation of it. Hence came the Protestant churches in their succession, to restore the down-trodden Truth, each protesting against these abuses and usurpations of human rights, each being called forth to make the Christian world realize the need of true Inspiration and of freedom of religion, the right to own a Bible and to study for themselves, and *the duty to make the Bible and the Bible only, the rule of their faith.*” *The Answerer*, Book 1, p. 64.

“Both books [DA and 2 SR] are endeavoring to say what the Bible says, and in order to bring harmony *we must re-study the subject directly from the Bible*, specifically from Joel's prophecy.” *The Answerer*, Book 1, p. 85.

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As we study the Words of Scripture, we will discover that “the hour and the day” are pre-ordained on YHWH'S eternal calendar, and realize that He keeps all His appointments. This is why Israel was allowed to celebrate annual commemoratives, because they were rehearsals of real redemptive events in the life of the church throughout time, and did not lose their significance at the Cross, when our Saviour died. This fact is clearly evidenced when we realize that on the very Day of Atonement on earth, October 22nd, 1844, the God of Eternity commenced his *investigative judgment*—an act which was predicted and repeated in the annual commemoration of the 10th day of the 7th month—*Yom-Kippur*, for thousands of years before! Ignorance of this calendric method of understanding divine events, caused the early Adventists (Millerites) to predict the Second Coming of Christ to this earth, in power and great glory, which worked out to be their greatest disappointment, as they were wrong on the expected *event*. Those who have not yet realized that God keeps all His appointments, are poised to making another equal or greater mistake, simply because they refuse to sink the shaft of investigation into the mine of God's Word to understand His sacred calendar contained in His *statutes* given to ancient Israel.

“Line upon line, precept upon precept, instruction upon instruction, have been given us, so that we, as a people, may know and *understand the ways of the Lord*, obey His voice, keep His charge, *commandments, statutes, and laws*; thus becoming the ‘children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise.’ When this is realized in the hearts of men then they will fulfill the charge given to Peter. Peter said, ‘Thou knowest I love Thee.’ Jesus saith unto him, ‘Feed My sheep.’”⁶⁷

“Today as in Moses' day many are duplicating the sins of that people: Some are all on fire one day, and all on ice the next. Others praise God to the top of their voices while their ship is smoothly sailing, but when the sea becomes rough and the waves start beating against them, then they see *only a man at the wheel* and rather than expecting God to calm the sea they begin to hunt for a jumping off place. Still others are constantly trying to promote themselves by continual fault-finding against the ones that bear the whole burden of the load. So it is that *there must be among us today* -- antitypical doubters, complainers *office seekers* and faultfinders, admitting one great truth one day and forgetting it the next day -- yet expecting to be sealed with the seal of God and to stand with the Lamb on Mt. Zion!”⁶⁸

“I have often been instructed by the Lord that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of *any other one man*. Never should *the mind of one man* or the minds of a few men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and to say what plans shall be followed... God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority. The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of *one man*, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled to plan for the prosperity and advancement of His work.

⁶⁷ V.T. Houteff, 1930, *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 1, p. 76.

⁶⁸ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 7, pp. 8, 9.

“When this power, which God has placed in the church, is accredited *wholly to one man*, and he is invested with the authority to be judgment for other minds, then *the true Bible order is changed*. Satan's efforts upon such a man's mind would be most subtle and sometimes well-nigh overpowering, for the enemy would hope that through his mind he could affect many others. Let us give to the highest organized authority in the church that which we are *prone to give to one man* or to a small group of men.”⁶⁹

“Were the work of *ministering to the flock* left *entirely to one man*, there would be *deficiency* in the results. In His providence the Lord sends *various* workmen. One is strong on some essential point where another is weak.”⁷⁰

“It is dangerous work to invest men with *authority to judge and rule* their fellow-men. Not to you nor to any other man has been given power to control the actions of God's people, and the effort to do this must be no longer continued. God has been dishonored by the education that has been given to the churches in Southern Calif. in *looking to one man as conscience and judgment for them*. God has never authorized *any man* to exercise a *ruling power over his fellow-workers*; and those who have allowed a *dictatorial spirit* to come into their official work, need to experience the converting power of God upon their hearts. They have *placed man where God should be*.

“When men engage in labor for the souls of others, they are not to be made amenable to the will of their fellow-laborers. God is well able to direct the course of action of those who work for Him. But when His laborers, instead of calling upon Him, seek first and regard as of first importance the counsel and advice of human minds, He is dishonored. The method of sending one minister to another minister to learn his duty is a plan of working that *should not be encouraged*. *Greater evils* will result from such a course than finite and erring man can foresee.”⁷¹

“When Christ fed the multitude, each one of the disciples was given a part in the work. Christ asked his Father's blessing on the food, and it came; but **the work was not left to one man**. Each one was given something to do. So it is now. God has given to every man his work; and he expects all to do their part faithfully. When the truth is presented, *God does not design that one man shall do the greatest part of the work*. *No man* should put himself and his work in the place of God. One man's voice must not be heard continually, while others stand by as onlookers. All are to labor for the promotion of the work. Every available power is to be used to carry forward the great work.”⁷²

“It is not in the order of God that any man, or any class of men, should assume that God has made them conscience for their brethren, or put forth their finite hand in a patronizing manner to control the Lord's delegated workers, thus endangering the safety of the Lord's heritage as well as their own, and retarding the work of God. God does not confine Himself to one man, or to a set of men, through whom to accomplish His work, but says of all, Ye “are laborers together with God.” This means that every believing soul should have a part to act in His sacred work, and every individual believer in Jesus Christ is to manifest to the world a symbol of Christ's sufficiency, to represent to His church the higher laws of the future immortal world, and in obedience to the mandates of Heaven that are without a parallel, they should reveal a depth of knowledge independent of human inventions.” {TM 208.2}.

When Moses was much burdened the Lord raised him up in Jethro an advisor and helper. The advice was taken and the burdens that had come upon him were divided with others and a two-fold object was gained; Moses was relieved and he had a better chance for his life, and men were learning to bear responsibilities to qualify them to do work in positions of trust so that Israel should not learn to *look to one man* and *trust in one man* and think that no one could do anything for them *unless it came before that one man*.”--Letter 64, 1886. {*Christian Leadership, Training Leaders*, p. 55.1}

The Porter Seen in the five calls of the Householder's for labourers into his vineyard. (Read Matt. 20: 1-19).

It is a very interesting fact to realize that each team of servants/labourers that was called to work in the Master's vineyard was called by Him, and not by the previous group, or by some election of sorts. It was simply a call *from the Householder* for

⁶⁹ E.G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, pp. 261-262.

⁷⁰ E.G. White, *Manuscript 21*, 1894, also in E.G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 104.3

⁷¹ E.G. White, August 29, 1907, *MS-95*, also in *Loma Linda Messages*, p. 241.2.

⁷² E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, March 29, 1898

labourers. So each call to the vineyard comes directly *from* the householder to the workers, who bear the present truth message in each dispensation. Very interestingly, we do not have a setting in which the Lord hires “servants” to call “labourers” into his vineyard, but a direct call from the Lord Himself, demonstrating that the leaders in each call were not elected by the previous labourers, but only by the Householder Himself. Let’s see how the Bible treats this important subject:

“¹ For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to *hire labourers into his vineyard*. ² And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, *he sent them* into his vineyard. ³ And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ And said unto them; *Go ye also into the vineyard*, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. ⁵ Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and *did likewise*. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? ⁷ They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. *He saith* unto them, *Go ye also into the vineyard*; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.” (Matt. 20: 1-7).

“There are only *five calls* in the parable; First, those who were called *early* -- Israel out of Egypt Second, those who went to labor in the vineyard at the *third hour* -- the early Christian church Third, the *sixth hour* call -- William Miller and his co-workers; Fourth, the *ninth hour* call -- the *Third angel in his first cry* after 1844; Fifth, the 11th hour call -- the *Loud Cry of the Third Angel's Message*.”⁷³

Many Davidians grimace at the thought that God’s festivals are relevant and applicable to believers in these days. This view is clearly summarized by a recent document published by the Bashan Association of Davidians, in which they hold that to keep the festivals would be tantamount to crucifying Christ afresh. In their own words I now quote:

There are many vital truths which we can never compromise on, but there are also many non-essential points on which we may with fidelity to the message permit a difference of opinion. Regarding *truths* in the first category, such as keeping the typical feasts today (clearly a part of the ceremonial law), for example, we are specifically told that “this law, of course, we today must not observe, except in *antitype*, for it foreshadowed things to come, particularly Christ’s first advent” (2TG 37: 14). Brother Houteff goes on to explain that by observing the ceremonial law (of which the feasts are an integral part), we would by our actions be demonstrating “unbelief in Christ” and His atonement on the cross, whether or not it was our intention to do so. *Compromising on such a point would be tantamount to crucifying our Saviour afresh*, something no true follower of Christ would ever agree to knowingly do.⁷⁴

The view here presented is the generally accepted view of a majority of Davidians, their “pasture” notwithstanding. So it should not be seen as a singling out of the Bashan group in this discovery. Whether or not the author of the paragraph above is aware of it, the “first category” of “non-essential points” he has actually, and correctly, called “**truths**,” yet he still condemns them as being “tantamount to crucifying the Saviour afresh.” The question I am challenged with is simply this: “which relevant **truth**, can cause a Christian to, by his obedience to it, crucify the Son of God afresh?” I am personally encouraged by Christ’s teaching which declares that, “now is, when the *true worshippers* shall worship the Father in spirit and in **truth**: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” (Joh 4:23). My friends, let us all become “truth”-worshippers, by His grace.

Every Davidian who rejects the feasts on account that they are irrelevant for today, reasons that they were never in Eden with Adam before sin, and since they were given to man after sin to point us to Christ, they have summarily been nailed to His cross at the crucifixion. This is a view that has been developed by Rome, and has been skillfully used by most Sunday-keepers and SDA’s who reject the entirety of the Commandments of YHWH. However, a mere pause for logical reasoning exposes this theory as untruthful and unbiblical. Now, if the feast days were given us on account of sin, thus making them a sort of “schoolmaster,” why should a loving God subject the saints to this rigorous schoolmaster during the kingdom era—a time when we have been washed from sin?

“Here you see that the announcement of this long-expected event is to be made by someone’s publications. Moreover, he publishes peace and thus announces the restoration of the Kingdom. This is the only peace that the world can have. There is to be no other. *Those who keep God’s solemn “feasts” and perform their vows shall have this peace. None others shall*.”⁷⁵

⁷³ V.T. Houteff, 1932, *The Shepherd’s Rod*, Vol. 2, p. 236

⁷⁴ V.T. Bingham, *Divided Davidia* © 2015, p. 6; italics added.

⁷⁵ V.T. Houteff, 1948, *Timely Greetings* Vol. 2, No. 42 p. 41; Italics added.

The Sheep Follow The Shepherd, Only

In the parable of the Divine Shepherd, our Saviour declared that the sheep will hear his voice and follow only the Shepherd, and that they do not know faces, but only the voice of truth. Let's examine those words more closely:

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for *they know his voice.*" (John 10:4).

Christ's emphasis on the sheep's knowledge of the Shepherd's voice rather than his personal features, should be a reminder to us that we do not follow a picture of a man, formed from Michael Angelo's imaginations, but we follow the Voice of the Good Shepherd—the Voice of *present truth*—meat in due season. To this thought the *Rod* adds, "Since His sheep know not faces, but know voices, then, *those who pay attention to faces* and who cannot differentiate between voice and voice are sure to be misled by *self-appointed shepherds*. But those who give heed only to the Voice, the Voice of Truth, are gently led in for shelter and out for green pastures. God's people are not bothered with faces, but they do give earnest heed to God-appointed voices uttering Truth."⁷⁶

This is a very salient truth, because it demonstrates that their ought not always be a living "face" for God's sheep to follow, hence they do not "pay attention to faces," but learn to "differentiate between voice and voice," as they follow the Lamb and Shepherd, whithersoever He leads. The self-appointed shepherds are those whose *faces* are omnipresent, for they are those who think that God's little flock ought always to have a living face to behold. Attesting to the fact that salvation is a walk of faith, Christ has clearly taught that "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10: 27). Did he say "My sheep *know my face*, and I know them, and they follow me?" No, indeed! But why his voice? Because the Holy Spirit is active with each believer, not just with the one or ones at the head of the organized work on earth.

Hear now the Spirit of Prophecy through Isaiah, "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa. 30: 21). God's sheep are not as interested in faces as they are in voice, the Voice of truth. And even thought we are promised that our prophets shall no longer be pushed to a corner, "but thine eyes shall see thy teachers," (Isa. 30: 20), it is not an absolute fact that we will always have a living prophet in our midst, and a glance at the history of the church throughout the ages, proves this to be so. Over the past two thousand years of Church history, there was not a continual, uninterrupted, presence of prophets in the church, and even in the SDA church this has not been the case either, but men and women were called to the prophetic office when Heaven had a message of *timely truth* to communicate to the little flock on earth.

We have shown in bold relief the truth of the porter that he is none other than the Holy Spirit, whose duties are shared with the Godhead and manifested on earth in sundry times and in various manners by confirming shepherds as prophets, such as David, Samuel, Joseph, White or Houteff, to lead the flock to green pastures of present truth.

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⁷⁶ V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 20; italics added.

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ⁱ This subject has been extensively covered in Brother M.J. Bingham's book, *The Servant and the Porter*. For his very exhaustive treatment on this topic, in comparison with what is presented in this article, you may request a copy of his book from *The Davidian Seventh-day Adventist Association*, at Bashan Hill, Exeter MO.