

# Who is “The Porter” in John 10:3?

## Clarifying the Teachings of Most Davidian Groups

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July 17, 2016

*“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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# Who is “The Porter”?

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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.<sup>1</sup>

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 function extends 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).

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

“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.

“<sup>19</sup> 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*.<sup>20</sup> And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the LORD was with him.<sup>21</sup> And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was *porter of the door of the tabernacle* of the congregation.<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup> 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.<sup>24</sup> *In four quarters* were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south.<sup>25</sup> And their brethren, which were in their villages, were to come after seven days from time to time with them.<sup>26</sup> For these Levites, the four chief *porters*, were in their set office, and were *over the chambers and treasuries* of the house of God.<sup>27</sup> And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and *the opening thereof every morning pertained to them*.<sup>28</sup> And certain of them had the *charge of the ministering vessels*, that they should bring them in and out by tale.<sup>29</sup> 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.<sup>30</sup> And some of the sons of the priests *made the ointment of the spices*.<sup>31</sup> 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*.<sup>32</sup> And other of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were *over the shewbread, to prepare it every Sabbath*.<sup>33</sup> And 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*.<sup>34</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> The LORD is thy keeper [porter]:<sup>8</sup> 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).
- “<sup>5</sup>Moreover **four thousand** were porters; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith. <sup>6</sup> 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 Bighthana 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).
- “<sup>1</sup> Concerning the *divisions of the porters*: Of the Korhites was Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph...<sup>8</sup> 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...<sup>12</sup> 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.”<sup>2</sup>

## The Porter In Mark 13

<sup>34</sup> 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*. <sup>35</sup> 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: <sup>36</sup>Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup> 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 beaven 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,*

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<sup>2</sup> Easton’s Bible Dictionary

*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.”<sup>3</sup>

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. “<sup>2</sup> 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: <sup>3</sup> 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: <sup>4</sup> 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...<sup>8</sup> But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come 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. <sup>9</sup> 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 at the in the shadows of the last Passover that the disciples were jockeying for power and prominence, and Christ rebuked them with this sermon:

“<sup>24</sup> And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. <sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup> But *it shall not be so among you*: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; <sup>27</sup> And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: <sup>28</sup> 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 pope is not of Christ and should not be practiced amongst His disciples.

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.

“<sup>16</sup> And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that *he may abide with you forever*; <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup>*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.

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<sup>3</sup> VT Houteff, 1941, *Mt. Zion At The Eleventh Hour*, Tract 8, pp. 69, 70; italics added.

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

<sup>1</sup>Verily, 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. <sup>2</sup>But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>To **Him** the *porter openeth*; and the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.<sup>4</sup> And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice.<sup>5</sup>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 a 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 that "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 that "I am the good Shepherd" (v. 11, 14).

**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, "<sup>26</sup>ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. <sup>27</sup>My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and *they follow me*: <sup>28</sup>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 is the body of true worshipers, thus he explained, "<sup>16</sup>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 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!

The Porter, then, is very acquainted with the true Shepherd and extremely discerning to keeping out false shepherds from ever entering through the door. Let's now see what Christ has said in this regard: "<sup>15</sup>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: "<sup>16</sup> 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:<sup>17</sup> And lo a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3: 16, 17).

On that memorable day and in this very demonstrable way was the proverbial "door" 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.*"<sup>4</sup>

Note carefully that it is the shepherd who must "pass the porter's inspection, with "must have" qualifications! Since 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. 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 porter who arrives at the door *after* the Shepherd has entered the sheepfold is an imposter!

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).<sup>5</sup> In 1929 when Brother 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! But since the sheep have been led to the Carmel *pasture*, there is evidence of a shepherd, which again propounds the question, which porter *inspected* the shepherd 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? No matter how far and wide we look, the disturbing answer is clear, there were no living inspired mouthpiece so trained and equipped for this mission. 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 at the door of the sheepfold and opened it to Heaven's chosen shepherd, who came equipped with "meat in due season," and lead the sheep out to graze in the Carmel *pasture*.

"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."<sup>6</sup> 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 voice of the Father's audible voice to the multitudes.

"**9**And 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.

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<sup>4</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1953, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 22; italics added.

<sup>5</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.



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], 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.

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.<sup>7</sup>

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."<sup>8</sup>

Both John The Baptist and Victor Houteff 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 (lacking the wedding garment), the shame of their nakedness will be revealed, exposing them as "thieves and robbers."

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. Below I shall quote from my ground-breaking article on *The Antitypical David*, to expose 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 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.

<sup>7</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1944, *The Answer*, Book 5, pp. 39, 40; italics and [added].

<sup>8</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1947, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No.17, 18, p. 21.

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.<sup>9</sup>

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: "<sup>30</sup>This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. <sup>31</sup> And **I knew him not**: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. <sup>32</sup> And John bare record, saying, *I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove*, and it abode upon him. <sup>33</sup> 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. <sup>34</sup>And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." John 1: 30-34.

John, you see, gave credit to “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 that “the porter” came *before* the Shepherd, *Y’shuah*, the Christ, and John the Baptist was called His “forerunner”<sup>10</sup>. 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.

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:

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<sup>9</sup> Garrick Augustus, January 1998, *The Antitypical David—The Beloved—Who Is He?* 12, 16; also found at: <http://www.heraldoftheking.net/studies>

<sup>10</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1932, *The Shepherd’s Rod*, Vol. 2, p. 243.

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 "quicken" 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.<sup>11</sup>

It must be noted that "the porter," as does the Messenger of the Covenant, opens the door of the sheepfold and lets the shepherds 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!

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. The Porter's job is to ensure that false shepherds do not enter the sheepfold, for they are in reality wolves in sheep's clothing.

## 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."<sup>12</sup>

"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."<sup>13</sup>

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.<sup>14</sup>

"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."<sup>15</sup>

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

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<sup>11</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1944, *The Answerer*, Book 1, p. 79

<sup>12</sup> E.G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 14.

<sup>13</sup> E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 21, 1899, par. 5.

<sup>14</sup> E.G. White, 1898, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 211, 212.

<sup>15</sup> E.W. White, *Review and Herald*, March 21, 1893 par. 3.

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."<sup>16</sup>

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:

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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? <sup>11</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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."

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*.<sup>17</sup>

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

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<sup>16</sup> E.G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 91.

<sup>17</sup> V. T. Houteff, 1940, *The Symbolic Code* Vol. 6, Nos. 1-6, [January - June, 1940], pp. 14, 15.

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,

“<sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup> Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. <sup>31</sup> Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. <sup>32</sup> 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).

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

## Christ Reckons With His Servants Without Reckoning With The Porter

“<sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> 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: <sup>36</sup> Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup> 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:

“<sup>14</sup> 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... <sup>19</sup> 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:

<sup>3</sup> 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; <sup>4</sup> 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*.<sup>18</sup>

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.<sup>19</sup>

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 being: <sup>20</sup> Thou gavest also **thy good Spirit to instruct them**, and withheldst not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst... <sup>30</sup> 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).

## 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.

<sup>49</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and *the Spirit of God came*

<sup>18</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1941, *Pre-Eleventh Hour Extra*, Tract 1, p. 37

<sup>19</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1947, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No.17, 18, p. 21.

upon him, and he prophesied among them. <sup>11</sup> 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.” *The Answerer* Book 1, pp. 43, 44

## 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:

“<sup>2</sup> 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; <sup>3</sup> Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>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 shepherds.

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 now 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.”<sup>20</sup>

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. 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.

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<sup>20</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 22.

“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. Leaving only one being to answer to this credential—the Holy Spirit—Heaven’s *confirming* agency. We recall that the Holy Spirit *confirmed* Christ’s messiahship when He was baptized at the hands of John 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 persons 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 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.”<sup>21</sup>

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*.<sup>22</sup>

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

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<sup>21</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 23.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 24.



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."<sup>23</sup>

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.

"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."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24.

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.”

## 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 swore unto them; and I will be with thee.’ *He spoke to Joshua in God’s stead.*”<sup>25</sup>

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:

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 25

<sup>25</sup> E.G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, p. 335.1; italics added.

“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.”<sup>26</sup>

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 *bear 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.

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.”<sup>27</sup>

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.”<sup>28</sup>

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

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<sup>26</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1942, *The Leviticus of D.S.D.A.*, pp. 5, 6.

<sup>27</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1942, *The Leviticus of D.S.D.A.*, p. 7.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

sacred work of the ministry,”<sup>29</sup> 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*.”<sup>30</sup>

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 being, 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, Gillead’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.

“<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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?” “<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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.’”<sup>31</sup>

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.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>30</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 20.

<sup>31</sup> E.G. White, 1882, *Early Writings*, pp. 230, 331

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.

“<sup>7</sup> But *the manifestation of the Spirit* is given to every man to profit withal. <sup>8</sup> For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; <sup>9</sup> To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; <sup>10</sup> 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, “<sup>20</sup> Thou gavest also *thy good Spirit* to instruct them ... <sup>30</sup> 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.

“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.”<sup>32</sup>

“<sup>2</sup> 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**. <sup>3</sup> 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.” 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 porter* while entering, must, of course, do so while coming out, too. Consequently, they cannot be led by God's appointed shepherds.”<sup>33</sup>

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: “<sup>11</sup> And when *the king* came in to see the guests, he saw there *a man which had not on a wedding garment*. <sup>12</sup> And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither *not having a wedding garment*? And he was speechless. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matt. 22: 11-14).

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<sup>32</sup> V.T. Houteff, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 2, No. 16, p. 22.

<sup>33</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 21

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*:<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.”<sup>34</sup>

“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.”<sup>35</sup>

“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.”<sup>36</sup>

“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.”<sup>37</sup>

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.”<sup>38</sup>

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

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.

We know that the Porter is Deity from yet another angle, a fact clearly stated in the parable; let’s go treasure hunting: “<sup>11</sup> I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. <sup>15</sup> 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,”

<sup>34</sup> E.G. White, 1913, *Counsels to Teachers Parents and Students*, p. 68.1; italics added.

<sup>35</sup> E.G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol, p. 211.3-212.1; italics added.

<sup>36</sup> E.G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 275.3; italics added.

<sup>37</sup> E.G. White, 1870, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, pp. 511, 512 , also in {1MCP 348.5}; italics added.

<sup>38</sup> E.G. White, *Maranatha*, p. 312.5; italics added.

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.”

“<sup>37</sup> All that *the Father giveth me* shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out... <sup>44</sup> 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. <sup>45</sup> 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 confuse the Holy Spirit of Prophecy for a mere mortal, that is blasphemy!

Since we now know that the porter is able to discern between sheep, shepherd, and goats, 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—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, and even while 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.<sup>39</sup>

Although the author of the above-statement declares that “the Bible shows us there must be” a human-porter today, in the light of Brother Houteff’s death, 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 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 s shown below:

“<sup>41</sup> 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*; <sup>2</sup> A minister of the sanctuary, and of *the true tabernacle*, which the Lord pitched, and not man. <sup>3</sup> For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. <sup>4</sup> For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: <sup>5</sup> 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 in heaven, is the reality of *the porter*? Why is *the porter* still on earth? 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

<sup>39</sup> M.J. Bingham, 1967, *The Servant and the Porter*, 1990 ed, p. 21; italics added.

Davidians who stumble at the porter, thus making Him an earthly fixture in the church! But every lesson in the earthly sanctuary sees him as an *heavenly* being, even the Holy Spirit, the *inspector* supreme, of every person connected with the Sanctuary.

We have over and over again proven that the one who “inspects” the saints is not a mere human being, 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.

## 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 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 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:

“<sup>1</sup> 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*. <sup>2</sup> And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, *he sent them* into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup> And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup> And said unto them; *Go ye also into the vineyard*, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. <sup>5</sup> Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and *did likewise*. <sup>6</sup> 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? <sup>7</sup> 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*.<sup>40</sup>

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:

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<sup>40</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1932, *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 2, p. 236



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.<sup>41</sup>

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.*”<sup>42</sup>

## 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.”<sup>43</sup>

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

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<sup>41</sup> V.T. Bingham, *Divided Davidia* © 2015, p. 6; italics added.

<sup>42</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1948, *Timely Greetings* Vol. 2, No. 42 p. 41; Italics added.

<sup>43</sup> V.T. Houteff, 1946, *Timely Greetings*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 20; italics added.

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 though 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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<sup>i</sup> 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.