THE GREAT CONTROVERSY OVER

"The Shepherd's Rod"

HEAR AND COUNT THE EVIDENCES
ON BOTH SIDES BEFORE FIRING
FOR OR AGAINST

TRACT NO. 7

By V.T. Houteff –

First Edition in 1936

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That everyone who thirsteth for the truth may obtain it, this tract is mailed free of charge. It levies one exaction, the soul's obligation to itself prove all things and hold fast that which is good. The only strings attached to this free proffer are the golden strands of Eden and the crimson cords of Calvary—the ties that bind.

Names and addresses of Seventh-day Adventist's sent to us will be appre-ciated.

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By V.T. Houteff

"Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" John 7:51. Count the evidences on both sides before firing for or against.

"They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." John 7:52.

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THE GREAT CONTROVERSY
over
"The Shepherd's Rod"

Dear Fellow Believers in the Third Angel's Message:

Believing that you would like to have authentic knowledge of the crisis now confronting our beloved S.D.A. church, we as brethren of like precious faith come to you in the name of Him Who, though altogether holy, did eat with publicans and sinners, and Who, though the Incarnation of holiness, never by word or by action said: "Stand by thyself come not near to Me; for I am holier than thou" (Isa. 65:5), but ever pleaded: "Ho, *every* one that thirsteth, come." Isa. 55:1.

Believing that most of you will (before helping the one side or the other fire its guns), do as did Nathanael (John 1:45-51), follow the example which the Lord has set before us, and respond to duty's challenge to investigate, – to "come and see," – we trust that you will, in the ensuing pages, give unbiased consideration to

The Facts Set Forth.

That the S.D.A. organization is divided over the issue of *The Shepherd's Rod* publications, we deeply deplore, and the more so when we stop to realize that such a break need never to have taken place, for God desired His voice, the *Rod*, to be heard, as He says,

through His prophet: "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city [the church], and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: *Hear* ye the Rod, and Who hath appointed it." Mic. 6:9

As you are among the many in the "city" to whom the Lord's voice is crying to hear the *Rod*, and as we want to believe that you are zealous for your salvation and for the salvation of your brethren, and wholeheartedly devoted to the welfare of the denomination, we must certainly believe that you are concerned to know the truth about this serious trouble squarely facing every Seventh-day Adventist.

In 1930, when *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 1, was yet in manuscript, thirty-three hectographed copies were placed in the hands of some of the leading brethren of the General Conference. In response to the author's plea that they make careful investigation of the contents, the recipients promised to do so and to make known, either in person or by letter, their findings and intentions.At the time that the first issue of this tract went to press, six years had passed by, and only two out of these thirty-three brethren had replied (none of the others having done so to date). One, Elder F.C. Gilbert, privately wrote a few lines, of which, inasmuch as they have since given rise to frequent questions concerning the published writing of *The Shepherd's Rod*, we subjoin a photographic copy for consideration

June 26, 1930.

JEWISH DEPARTMENT

F.C. Gilbert Secretary

Mr. Victor T. Houteff,

Los Angeles, California,

Dear Brother:-

While at the last General Conference convened in San Francisco you stopped me one day in the hall near one of the entrances to the auditorium, and handed me rather a voluminous document which you said you wished to place in my hand, and asked me to read it, and write you my comment on the same.

The document being of so voluminous a type that it would make it well nigh impossible for an ordinary man to dispose of in some months. I realize that time is very precious, and of course I presume you are desirous of receiving some sort of reply.

So I took a little time and perused certain sections of the document, and I thought I would render to you my findings.

I especially wish to note your Section #3. Your Section #3 covers five pages. In scanning those pages of that section I notice that you dwell in those pages on Esau and Jacob. You compare these two men to symbols. They represent various symbols. In those five pages you make many strong statements of the application of those two individuals to our present day, but you give no Scriptural proof. You understand, dear brother, when a man says a thing or a person means so and so, he must have divine proof for his assertion. If not, why should a person accept as authority his statement any more than a person should accept as authority any one else's statement. In dealing with the Word of God, we must be guarded that we do not insert into Scripture what does not contain there. If the Spirit of God should make a comment on a text, then the application is inspired. But when a man makes an assertion in regard to a Scripture and He has no divine authority for the support of his assertion, he is liable to handle the Word of God deceitfully. I am sure you do not intend to do anything like that, but there is a possibility nevertheless.

Let me illustrate to you what I mean. In your Section #4, page #4, you say:-

"The Beginning Of Famine."

"The dividing line between the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine is the cross. Where the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine begin. The first year of the famine is the beginning of the church of Christ at the time of the apostles."

Now, dear brother, where do you get any authority from the Word of God or from the *Spirit of Prophecy* for such an assertion? Where do you find in inspiration any ground for such a comment? You simply make the statement on your own authority, but you have no scriptural basis for making such a statement.

It would seem that if ever there was a time when the Word of God was in abundance it was at the time when the apostles went forth preaching the Word of God. The Holy Spirit gave those men of God such divine enlightenment on the Old Testament Scriptures that they had an understanding of the Word in a most clear and forceful manner. The Bible really became a new book to the people in the days of those apostles. As you read Acts, chapters two, three, and four, you receive a most beautiful insight into the meaning of some of the Psalms and the writings of the Prophets. It was the application of the Old Testament Scriptures by those apostles of Christ which led hundreds, yes thousands to accept the Saviour. Surely that was no time of famine.

It seems to me, dear brother, that God has given to us a richness in His Word, in the writings of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, and in the many blessed books written by men of God among us. It seems to me that if as a man you wish light on the Scriptures you should take time and read such writings, and then you will receive great spiritual food for your own soul. If you should go along and read and study the way you have outlined in that voluminous document, after a time you would be greatly confused yourself. It would bring confusion wherever you might suggest things.

Believe me, sincerely your brother,

F. C. Gilbert

The Denominational ministers, not giving the gist of its contents, tried to make God's people believe that Elder Gilbert's letter was written on behalf of the *General Conference Committee*. In view of this, we invite our Seventh-day Adventist brethren carefully to examine the letter, so as to prove to their complete satisfaction that it is neither directly from the General Conference Committee nor representing it, but that rather it is purely the expression of his personal belief.

Moreover, it has been circulated among Seventh-day Adventists that "Elder Gilbert has seen no light in the manuscript, and that therefore they ought not to waste time investigating its claims."

Have the people of the whole denomination succumbed to the brain of one man? Is Elder Gilbert to dictate from now on as to what shall and what shall not be brought before God's people? If so then think in what fearful jeopardy is our eternal welfare!

Note his confessing, in the first and second paragraphs of his letter, that he has not made a thorough study of the manuscript submitted to him; yet he passed judgment upon it! The manuscript itself, though, convincingly proved that the Old Testament is the great storehouse of God's Word – the supply depot of spiritual food for His people during the New Testament time; but Elder Gilbert endeavors to refute this obvious fact by his statement, "the Holy

Spirit gave those men of God such divine enlightenment of the *Old Testament* Scriptures that they had an understanding of the Word in a most clear and forceful manner. The *Bible* [the Old Testament] really became a new book to the people in the days of those apostles." But in thus attempting to discredit the claims of the manuscript, he unwittingly only confirms them.

Then concerning the lesson from the experiences of *Esau and Jacob*, the letter says: "You give no Scriptural proof" for the "application of those two individuals to our present day." Anyone who will take the pains to study the subject, now published in *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 1, will find an abundance of "Scriptural proof."

Moreover, as the central theme of the entire manuscript is neither the Old and New Testament nor Esau and Jacob, but rather the 144,000, the Elder's duty was to give us his views on that subject. His cavils, therefore, over points of secondary importance, are beside the real point at issue – the truth about the 144,000.

In notable contrast to Elder Gilbert's letter are the two letters which follow, one from a Seventh-day Adventist minister then holding a responsible position with the denomination, and the other from a Seventh-day Adventist physician, formerly a teacher in one of the Denomination's colleges, and a reputed student of the Scriptures.

Charleston, S.C., Dec. 15, 1933.

My Dear Brother Houteff:

I wish to thank you most heartily for calling my attention, as a minister of the gospel, to the precious truths of the Bible, and the gems of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, which are so abundant throughout the two little volumes of the "Shepherd's Rod," so kindly sent me, either by yourself, or at your request, no doubt.

For many years I have been deeply interested in what the *Spirit of Prophecy* tells us should take place in our midst by way of "revival and reformation," and have therefore watched with deep interest every attempt to launch such a "reformatory movement," but have been disappointed in all of them, for they never seemed to materialize, so when your little booklets came along they found me really hungry for just such a revival of "true godliness" in my own heart.

I might say that when I first looked at the "Shepherd's Rod," the very name seemed to prejudice me, and I came near tearing it up several times before I really read it, but each time, when I was about to destroy the book, the thought would come to me that this is against my principle, and I would lay the book away again. When I finally did read it, I was startled, and many times I would cry out to God to forgive me for my sins as a minister, if He were really speaking to me through this little volume, and when I finished it, I was convinced that I had read no ordinary book, but being very cautious about accepting error, I began the second reading, making comparison with the Bible and the Testimonies to be sure they were in harmony but before each reading, I would cry to God to "reveal truth and unmask error," according to His promise. T.M. 107.

When I had finished the second reading of the book, I was afraid it was true, for I knew full well, if it were true, I, as a minister, would be held accountable to God for my attitude toward the abundance of light that He had called my attention to that I had never seen before. Of course I naturally wondered from whence came such knowledge, and decided to re-read the book to make sure that I had not overlooked anything in the way of specious error and when I had finished it the third time, although I did not understand everything in the book, yet I was convinced of one thing, and that is, I could not refute anything in it, for it harmonized with the Bible and the *Spirit of Prophecy*.

And now after nearly three years of watching the result the reading of the "Shepherd's Rod" has upon both minister and laity, I find that, almost without exception, the ministers reject the message of the book, either blindly or for fear of their superiors, and the laity, almost without exception, receive its message of reproof and warning with joy and gladness, and seek to correct their lives accordingly, and the spiritual tone of said persons is much higher than ever before for they love the message of the Third Angel more, and they love the brethren better than before.

In closing this letter I wish to say to you that I believe the Lord has used you to bring to our people as important a message as the one that came to the S.D.A. church while assembled in conference at Minneapolis, and I think I am correctly informed, being a minister in this denomination for many years, and having labored both in the United States and in foreign fields. We have seemingly rejected the message of reform set forth in "The Shepherd's Rod" as completely as our brethren rejected the one in 1888.

May the Lord richly bless you in everything you undertake in His name is the prayer of your brother in Christ.

E. T. Wilson

TO WHOM THIS MAY CONCERN:

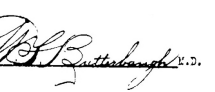
In compliance with the instruction on pp. 104-7 of Testimonies to Ministers, "How Shall We Search the Scriptures," I took it upon myself to summon together a few consecrated Seventh-day Adventist brethren to meet with the author of "The Shepherd's Rod" in the rear of my office building in Chandler, Colorado, – my former place of practice. This was done upon my own responsibility. Having, through a very intimate brother, a personal knowledge of the controversy in California concerning the publication of "The Shepherd's Rod" and the gross injustice to the author, I felt deeply impressed to meet him in person and thus give him a candid and honest hearing. I also felt I should invite the presence of an ordained minister to participate in this study. Providentially, circumstances seemed to shape themselves for the presence of Elder E.T. Wilson, president of the Carolina conference. He, together with brother and sister H.G. Warden and the local elder of the Florence S.D.A. church and of its membership constituted our company for study.

FINDINGS

Those engaged in the study were profoundly convinced with the fact that in man's strength alone it is absolutely impossible to formulate, shape or fit together the many complicated Bible symbols, types, facts or truths, into a comprehensible relationship of illustrated interpretation in which error be easily unmasked, and the complexity of various related truths be simplified into such form as to be comprehended by those of untutored minds, as well as those of culture, in which all can be made to agree that Bible statements and apparent discrepancies can be arranged so as to become astoundingly simple in the sense of concentrated brevity.

After a week of careful study of three sessions daily, preceded by prayer, all present participating in beseeching the Lord that through His Holy Spirit He might direct in the discovery of truth, and that error, if such there be, might be made manifest; it was mutually agreed upon, that aside from typographical error, and in some cases of incorrect English, also certain historical statements of which we could neither affirm nor deny; and furthermore, it being ascertained that the author had never heretofore been associated with spiritualism in any of its forms, and as every study enlarged by exceeding great light upon the "Three Angels' Messages," also many vital and controverted points that have been perplexing mysteries were perfectly cleared up, there was left no question of doubt in our minds that these volumes have been prepared under some form of divine enlightenment; and that the time is fully ripe for the unfolding of these truths to a perishing world.

Respectfully submitted,



That Elder Gilbert, who has not studied *The Shepherd's Rod*, should think that he could discern whether it is truth or error, is incredible. But as his two fellow respondents have thoroughly studied the book, it is perfectly reasonable to conclude that their judgment is reliable.

These letters from our files, are but two of the many, written by those who have studied *The Shepherd's Rod* message, and who confess that it contains the call of the hour. Now let the *Spirit of Prophecy* further shape your decision as to

The Need of Personal Investigation.

"God has precious light to come to His people…. When new light is presented to the church, it is perilous to shut yourselves away from it…. To condemn that which you have not heard and do not understand will not exalt your wisdom in the eyes of those who are candid in their investigations of truth. And to speak with contempt of those whom God has sent with a message of truth, is folly and madness…. For God will glorify His Word that it may appear in a light in which we have never before beheld it…. Light will come to every earnest seeker for truth, as it came to Nathanael…. There should be liberty given for a frank investigation of truth, that each may know for himself what is the truth….

"Precious light is to shine forth from the Word of God, and let no one presume to dictate what shall or

what shall not be brought before the people in the messages of enlightenment that He shall send, and so quench the Spirit of God. Whatever may be his position of authority, no one has a right to shut away the light from the people. When a message comes in the name of the Lord to His people, no one may excuse himself from an investigation of its claims. No one can afford to stand back in an attitude of indifference and self-confidence, and say: 'I know what is truth. I am satisfied with my position. I have set my stakes, and I will not be moved away from my position, whatever may come. I will not listen to the message of this messenger; for I know that it can not be truth.' It was from pursuing this very course that the popular churches were left in partial darkness, and that is why the messages of heaven have not reached them." – *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 60-65.

In 1933, almost three years after the General Conference brethren were handed the manuscript of *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 1, and after the matter had come to a point where they could no longer go on without giving the laity some sort of reply as to the official attitude toward the teachings of the *Rod* (and as to why they had not, like brethren, sat down with the author and given him a candid hearing), the officers of the Fullerton, California, Tabernacle church became instrumental in getting the Pacific Union Conference to grant him the hearing he had long

been denied. Following is a verbatim statement of

The Agreement:

To the Members of the Pacific Union Conference Committee:

Dear Brethren:

We, as members of the Tabernacle Church of S.D.A. of Fullerton, Calif., after counseling with Victor T. Houteff concerning the teachings of *The Shepherd's Rod*, respectfully request that you appoint a committee of ten or twelve "brethren of experience" to meet with Brother Houteff while he places before them the evidence for his belief in the fundamentals of his message. The subjects to be considered are – "The Harvest," "Ezekiel 9," "The Leopard Beast of Rev. 13," "Hosea chapters 1-2," and "Matt. 20." In these studies Brother Houteff is to use only the writings of the Bible and the *Spirit of Prophecy*.

The time used is not to exceed one week.

After each study the committee selected may retire for counsel, and may then submit its evidence for mistakes in Brother Houteff's teaching, such evidence to be drawn from the Bible and the *Spirit of Prophecy* only.

If after the first study mistakes may be substantiated from authority mentioned above, further studies are not to be given. The same conditions are to prevail after each succeeding study.

In case the committee find error in the teaching of *The Shepherd's Rod*, and are able to refute same by the teachings of the Bible and the *Spirit of Prophecy* Brother Houteff agrees to renounce the advocacy of *The Shepherd's Rod*, and to make public renunciation of same.

Brother Houteff also agrees to discontinue the propagation of *The Shepherd's Rod*, so far as he can control same, in the Pacific Union Conference, during the time this investigation is being made.

The conditions hereby entered into are in compliance with the instruction given in *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, page 293; *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, pages 65-66.

Respectfully submitted,
Representatives for Tabernacle Ch.
J.W. RICH,
L.R. SOMMERVILLE

For *The Shepherd's Rod*,
V.T. HOUTEFF

Shortly after the foregoing appeal was presented, the following letter was received:

Fullerton, Calif.,
Jan. 23, 1934.

Victor T. Houteff,
10466 S. Hoover St.
Los Angeles, Calif.
Dear Brother Houteff:

In a telephone communication this evening from Elder Prout he tells me that the Union Conference Committee have agreed to provide the committee

that was requested in our arrangement the other day, and that the Union would try to get the men together within a couple of weeks for the hearing.

He did not know the personnel of the committee, or at least did not report to me their names so I do not know who they are to be. It is supposed that the place and time of the meeting will be arranged for in the near future. Just how this will be done was not stated, whether they will get in touch with you direct, or will send us the information here I do not know. At least we will know more about the matter in the near future.

Trusting the whole arrangement will be for the exaltation of the truth of God and will help us all in our study of the Bible and the *Spirit of Prophecy*, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J.W. RICH

Four weeks after we received Elder Rich's letter, Elder Prout and Elder Rich in person delivered the decision of the Conference to hold the proposed meeting the following Monday. Having, however, a prearranged important engagement for that date, we were obliged to request postponement of the meeting.

Though, obviously, circumstance alone dictated our petition, the report was circulated that we sought to avoid compliance with our agreement, although for three years we had been praying, hoping, and

striving to get the sitting! The candid reader, however, will quickly perceive the truth of the matter from these facts and from the fact that a few hours after Elders Prout and Rich delivered our oral request, Elder Calkins, the Pacific Union Conference President, sent by private dispatch the following letter:

Glendale, California,
Feb. 15, 1934.

Victor T. Houteff,
10466 S. Hoover St.,
Los Angeles, California.
Dear Mr. Houteff:

In harmony with your written request of January 18 for a hearing before a body of leading brethren, the Union Conference Committee has set aside Monday, February 19, for this purpose.

This is to notify you that the meeting will be held at 10 A.M. on that date, at 4800 South Hoover Street, Los Angeles.

This will confirm the verbal notice given you this morning by Elders C.S. Prout and J.W. Rich.

Yours very sincerely,
(Signed) GLENN CALKINS.

While the foregoing letter from Elder Calkins, in confirmation of the committee's earlier oral notification, was in transit, we had, by way of formal protest of the committee's dealings in the whole matter, written and posted to him the substance of our earlier

oral request to Elders Prout and Rich. The text of the letter is as follows:

10466 S. Hoover St.,
Los Angeles, Calif.,
Feb. 15, 1934.

Elder Glenn Calkins,
Glendale, Calif.
Dear Elder Calkins:

I am very glad for the opportunity that prompts me to write you this letter. Elder Prout has informed me that you have kindly agreed to respond to our request for a hearing.

I am exceedingly happy to know of this agreement and shall be greatly delighted to present to such a committee the added light to the Third Angel's Message (E.W. 277). But I think, Elder Calkins, no effort should be spared to make our time together a success, for the purpose of our meeting is either of very great importance for all concerned, or else it is of no value at all. Therefore, may I suggest that it be properly arranged and orderly conducted, taking no chance of violating any good that might be derived from such a procedure.

When our appeal to the Union Conference was made by the members of the Tabernacle Church of Fullerton, California, and myself, it was verbally agreed that those who have been at war with *The Shepherd's Rod* should be excluded from the committee, but Elder Prout's list of the proposed com-

mittee shows that nearly every one composing the personnel already is bitterly opposed.

Realizing that we are dealing with a matter which involves our eternal interest, and of the destiny of our church members, the selection seems not only pernicious but also inadvisable for you to trust, and foolish for me to accept. For inasmuch as neither the General nor the Union Conference committees have acted upon the message of *The Shepherd's Rod*, these men prove themselves unfit for the occasion, for they have heretofore acted independent of the conference – the highest authority – by speaking against the message from the pulpit and have even caused some of us to be carried bodily out of the church buildings for no other reason than our presence – shameful for the church of God! They, therefore, have already made the denomination liable for suit and heavy damages. Shall you let these men go further in their poor and despotic judgment? Moreover, they have published far and wide that I have been given a hearing by representatives of the denomination while they well knew that no such thing has taken place at any time!

Regardless of how insignificant the case may be, no civil court would ever select a jury of this kind. Why should we? Is not our salvation far more important than earthly gain?

Let me suggest, Elder Calkins, that you select men who are dependable. Men who do not condemn a

brother without a hearing. Men who can stand true to principle though the heavens fall, (not flesh eaters), and only those who truthfully believe the Third Angel's Message according to the *Spirit of Prophecy*. Then let us meet like brethren for prayer and study in a Christlike spirit where we can have the fullest assurance of the Lord's presence to open our understanding of the Word. Otherwise, we shall remain exceedingly ignorant of what truth is, and thus though the dead may arise we shall not awake.

I was further informed that I should appear alone before the committee. In this I see no wisdom at all. If the committee is to meet with me with the sole purpose to condemn and send one over the road, so to speak, regardless of justice or truth, and to rob God's church from a possible blessing in a message, then I say, it is wisely arranged. But I do not think this is your intention, Elder Calkins. I think you are honest to yourself and true to God. At least this is the impression I had when you met with the Exposition Park Church Committee, some years ago, of which I was a member. It was the time when you came to iron out the trouble against Elder Paap. As you have selected your men, is it not fair and just to let me bring some of the brethren who are well acquainted with *The Shepherd's Rod*? What injury can they bring against justice?

It will be impossible for me to meet you brethren on the day stated by Elder Prout. I request that arrangement be made for a week from next Monday –

Feb. 26. Let me hear from you at once, so I can plan accordingly.

May the good Lord lead you at this time and help you faithfully perform your duty as a president of the conferences, and with this momentous problem of the hour. I am

Yours for brotherly love,
Christlike Spirit, and for the
good of His people,
(Signed) V. T. HOUTEFF

Completely ignoring both our oral request and our written protest, they uncompromisingly forced us into meeting them on their own terms. And so not to have wrung from our grasp the opportunity we had so long sought, and not to be made out as defaulters, to the detriment of the Truth, we were compelled to bow to their pleasure at our severe inconvenience, as well as to judges most of whom were already the *Rod's* bitter enemies.

The Members of the Committee Were:

A.G. DANIELLS, Chairman	GLENN CALKINS
W.G. WIRTH, Secretary	C.M. SORENSON
G.A. ROBERTS	F.C. GILBERT
C.S. PROUT	W.M. ADAMS
J.C. STEVENS	J.A. BURDEN
H.M.S. RICHARDS	O.J. GRAF

The Fullerton proposal was in no sense designed as a final agreement, but merely as an appeal. But disregardful of its design, the Pacific Union Conference arbitrarily, without slightest advisement, decreed it a contract of investigation!

The several subjects to have been considered were "The Harvest," "Ezekiel Nine," "The Leopard-like Beast of Revelation 13," "Hosea, chapters One and Two," and "Matthew 20." The time was not to exceed one week for the entire number. But after the very first study, they called an adjournment, and made no arrangements for either the presentation of the remaining subjects called for or for

The Promised Reply.

After a lapse of about four weeks from the adjourned session, we were informed of the time that they would render their reply, which they had prepared in writing! At this meeting, twelve of the Rod's adherents were present, no objection being made to their attending. One of the committee read the long-delayed report of their findings, which plainly showed that the document was composed with the determined end in view of refuting, at any cost, the message of the Rod, even at the price of using means often employed against the Sabbath truth. This fact will be painfully clear to all who honestly read the document which is now in print under the title, *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*.

Immediately after reading it to us, they adjourned the meeting, inflexibly denying our insistent plea for even three minutes' time in which to make a statement. Such arbitrary and inconsiderate proceedings, anything but Christ-like, indicate that the committee well knew that their report against the *Rod* had not

refuted a single point. For had they believed otherwise, they right there and then would have solemnly charged us to honor our agreement to retract our teachings, and would then have thrown the meeting open for testimonies of confession. But no, they refused to hear a word from any of us!

Moreover, the agreement specified that we should first give them the study on "The Harvest," and that to it alone they were to respond. But in their belated reply, again disregarding the terms of the agreement, they endeavored at one stroke to refute the entire message by quoting from the volumes of *The Shepherd's Rod* statements which, being lifted from the context, and which, thus deprived of all supporting evidence, appeared as sheer assumption, wholly divest of authority, and even contradictory one to another and to the *Spirit of Prophecy*!

However, neither their unprincipled actions nor their sophistic refutation have, as they had hoped downed the message. On the contrary, they have served only to lift it up. They have, however, caused the indolent and superficial – every one who is depending upon others to decide what is truth and what is error – to remain in their Laodicean condition, – lukewarm, satisfied, waiting to be "spued out."

Elder A.G. Daniells, chairman of the committee of twelve, promised Brother Houteff a copy of the document which they read to us, but to this day they have never honored their promise. For two months

after the meeting, we intermittently telephoned the Union Conference office, each time only to receive some excuse and another fruitless promise. Finally while the Spring Council was in session in Washington, D.C., we sent Elder Daniells the following telegram:

Los Angeles, California,
April 28, 1934.

Eld. A.G. Daniells,
Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.
Care of Spring Council, S.D.A.

"Although you promised delivery Harvest study report, after editing, in a few days, six weeks have elapsed, notwithstanding frequent requests to Union Conference for delivery have been made. Reports indicate, whole, or portions, are being circulated already. Wire if true, also date you will deliver my copy."

(Signed) V.T. HOUTEFF

To this urgent request, likewise no reply was ever made.

We realize that the committee's action is hardly believable. And we deeply regret that they have compelled us, in defense of the Truth, herein to disclose the facts, that each may know and decide for himself, as the *Spirit of Prophecy* instructs:

"As the student sacrifices the power to reason and judge for himself, he becomes incapable of discriminating between truth and error, and falls an easy prey

to deception. He is easily led to follow tradition and custom…. The mind that depends upon the judgment of others is certain, sooner or later, to be misled." – *Education*, pp. 230, 231.

Such a time as the present will reveal to each whether he is trusting in God alone or also in a Daniel, a Noah, or a Job. Those who let others do their thinking and studying deciding for them, will be fearfully disappointed when soon they find themselves on the wrong side. Then "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." This danger, therefore, leads us to examine the genuineness of the *Reply*, also to test the interpretative ability of

The Mind That Influenced the Minds of Twelve.

In a letter to Dr. W. S. Butterbaugh, Professor Graf designates the conference investigating committee as "the committee of twelve," repeating the phrase a number of times, making it apparent that they should be regarded as just as dignified a body of authority today as the Sanhedrin was in Christ's time. One of these was Professor Graf himself, whose early brochures, in their phraseology and argument, in comparison with that of the *Reply*, reveal that this "committee of twelve," so far as their contribution to the *Reply* is concerned, was a committee virtually of only one, and that their findings were the product of this one's ingenious methods of interpretation. Thus has the laity been defrauded of an impartial represen-

tative report, and given the theological preconceptions and devisings of one mind, as the findings of twelve!

In an endeavor to overthrow the Doctor's faith in the *Rod*, the Professor in his letter says:

"Now, my brother, I believe you have had enough experience in the study and interpretation of the Scriptures to realize that it is positively dangerous to try to build up essential Biblical doctrine and interpretation based on the interpretation of symbols and parables."

Here actually, incredible as it is, the professor emphatically states that to depend on types, symbols, and parables is "positively dangerous" as a "basis" upon which to build "essential Biblical doctrine." But if his assertion is correct, then he is not arraigning merely the *Rod* doctrines, but also the S.D.A. doctrines, for they are based largely upon the interpretation of symbols!

As with most S.D.A.'s, the writer of this tract was converted to the Seventh-day Adventist church by its revealed doctrines, essentially all of which are based on symbols and types, such as the great image of Daniel 2 and the beasts of Daniel 7. Indeed, their interpretation provides the only key that unlocks the present and the future, revealing that the kingdoms of this world are to come to their end at the setting up of the kingdom of Christ: for the stone which was

"cut out without hands" (Dan. 2:34), smote the image, ground it to powder, and scattered it to the four winds.

The simple truth is that the interpretation of the symbolical beasts of Daniel 7 is the very backbone of S.D.A. "essential Bible doctrine." The truth of the "little horn," which had "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" (Dan. 7:8), is what made us join the S.D.A. denomination! Seeing, therefore, that the most essential S.D.A. doctrines are based upon the interpretation of symbols, we asked the Professor to explain just wherein lies the danger of them. But to date nine years have gone by and we are still patiently awaiting his explanation!

Again: if the committee believe, as does the Professor, that symbols and types are not dependable, then the denomination must have just recently changed its position, for it has ever, and with great stress, taught these symbols, also the types, such as the Exodus movement as a *type* of the 1844 movement. (See *Certainties of the Advent Movement*, and the little booklet, *Forty Years in the Wilderness*.)

Obviously, therefore, the committee should confess their own extraordinary blunder, and acknowledge the truth that symbols are not only positively necessary, but are also positively safe, as a basis of "essential Bible doctrine." And this blunder alone should give sufficient impetus to everyone to make an honest and thorough personal investigation of the

Rod.

Now we may ask the question, what actuated them to take such a position against the *Rod*, even contrary to what they have been teaching? Clearly, it is their inability to refute the subject of "The Harvest." Says the *Spirit of Prophecy*:

"The true Interpreter must come. The One whom all these types prefigured, must explain their significance.

"Through nature, through types and symbols, through patriarchs and prophets God had spoken to the world. Lessons must be given to humanity in the language of humanity…. He, the author of truth, must separate truth from the chaff of man's utterance, which had made it of no effect. The principles of God's government and the plan of redemption must be clearly defined. The lessons of the Old Testament must be fully set before men." – *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 33, 34.

"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." – *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 14.

"All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in *parables*; and without a parable spake He *not* unto them." Matt. 13:34.

The Professor is evidently blind to the fact that the ceremonial system with all its symbolic ritual is the basis of the Old Testament teachings, and is also, along with Christ's parables, likewise the basis of the New Testament teachings, and that the prophetic

types and symbols of Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Zechariah, The Revelation, and all the rest of the Bible, being designed expressly to throw light upon the closing work of the gospel, are obviously of vital necessity and of singular safety as the basis of "essential Bible doctrine." Indeed, how else could it be, and they still be as they are – the ground-work of the Scriptures?

Moreover, as these symbols, types, and parables are not interpreted in the writings of Sister White (only a promise there being made that someone must come to interpret them), and as the Professor accepts no other authority of interpretation, then it is evident that he and those who put credence in what he says, will never arrive at the truth of these things! But still worse, is their

Pseudo-Refutation.

For many years we S.D.A.'s have as a people earnestly met the sophistries extensively employed against the truths of the Three Angels' Messages; such, for example, as the arguments brought against the Sabbath truth, and as those brought against the *Spirit of Prophecy* by defenders of private (uninspired) interpretation, but we are astonished to see our General Conference brethren resorting to the same devious methods, and what is even worse, doing so against a brother who is trying to exalt the Third Angel's Message and the gift of the *Spirit of Prophecy*.

We are fully aware that the collocation of quotations from *The Shepherd's Rod* and the *Spirit of Prophecy*, as set forth in the booklet, *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*, makes them appear to be in direct conflict with each other. But this false appearance has been effected by isolating the statements from their contextual connections. For example, if we lift from Psalm 53:1, the clause which says "there is no God," we make David speak as an atheist, and the Bible as the most self-contradictory work in all literature. This is the method of extracting the statements which compose the following

Unfair Comparisons.

These comparisons are found in *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*.

The Shepherd's Rod

"The exile of Pope Pius VI, in 1798, and his death at Valence, France, Aug. 19, 1799, is not [italics author's] the receiving of the wound, no more than the death of any other pope before or after." – The Shepherd's Rod, Vol. 1, page 215.

The Spirit of Prophecy

"'I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.' The infliction of the deadly wound points to the downfall of the papacy in 1798." – The Great Controversy, page 653 (new edition).

"This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the supremacy of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time, the pope was made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled 'He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.'" – Id., page 501.

The foregoing statements are reproduced verbatim

from *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*, Pages 42, 38.

The unscrupulous method which the brethren have used in these comparisons, in the desperate effort to prove *The Shepherd's Rod* wrong, can be turned upon the Bible and upon the denomination's own publications. For instance:

The Signs of the Times:

"…Therefore it is neither right nor scriptural to declare that the Roman Catholic Church is the fifth head of the dragon or the beast of Revelation 13." – Signs of the Times, April 12, 1932.

The Shepherd's Rod:

"The idea concerning the symbolical application of … the leopard-like beast of Revelation 13, the scarlet beast of Revelation 17, … as being symbols of the papacy is unbiblical and also illogical." – The Shepherd's Rod, Vol. 2, p. 148.

By this shady method, moreover, one can much more easily contradict Paul by the writings of Moses than they have contradicted *The Shepherd's Rod* by the *Spirit of Prophecy*, as can be seen from the following examples:

Says Paul; "Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? … One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Rom. 14:4, 5.

"But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." Ex. 20:10.

Why not accuse Paul of teaching that one can keep any day so long as he "regardeth it unto the Lord"?

"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be with thanksgiving." Tim. 4:4.

"Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you." Lev. 11:4.

Why not here also accuse Paul of teaching that man can eat anything and everything, though forbidden in the Word of God?

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire but to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Phil. 1:23, 24.

"For the living know that they shall die; the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward: for the memory of them is forgotten." Eccl. 9:5.

If "the committee of twelve" had lived in the days when Paul preached, and if they were given to their present method of investigation, then by their failing to consider the sum of what the apostle was teaching in his statements, they would have condemned him as a teacher of evolution, of the conscious state of the dead and of intemperance, and under such deception they would have been among the first to cry for his head, as they are now in the van crying down *The Shepherd's Rod*.

Unenvied as they would be in their guilt had they taken Paul's blood yet their chance of entering into eternal life would be far better (if their ignorance of what Paul was teaching could possibly excuse them) than it will be if they impenitently continue in their unfair dealing with the message of the *Rod*. For it may be somewhat difficult to understand these teachings of Paul, but it certainly is not difficult to understand the teachings of the *Rod*, for the lines immediately following those which the committee quote, plainly declare that the non-descript and the leopard-like beasts do represent the papacy. And fur-

thermore, though the *Rod* expressly states that both the horn-head, having "the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things," and the head which was wounded to death, represent the papacy, they have made it appear to teach otherwise.

The quotation from *The Shepherd's Rod*, found on page 30 of this tract, shows by what follows it, that the *Rod* is merely trying to explain that though some of the beasts represent the Roman power, it is both unbiblical and illogical to presume that they *all* are symbolical of that system, or that the leopard-like beast *as a whole* (seven heads and ten horns) can be symbolical of it alone; for it is symbolized by the head that was wounded. The six uninjured heads and the ten horns must therefore be symbols of other systems. But withholding these facts from the people, they deal unfairly with the *Rod*, and they are deceiving and confusing the laity. There is no excuse for this, for if they are too busy to read, then by a mere glance at the illustration on page 84 of *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 2, they can recognize that it does not say what they are trying to make it say.

Every other argument which they have brought against the *Rod* in order to turn the laity away from it, can be silenced as quickly, simply, and completely as the foregoing samples have been. Should anyone doubt, we invite their questions. Select the strongest

contradiction you can find set forth by any of the *Rod's* opposers, and we promise to clear it.

Perhaps their grossest distortion of fact is the statement: "When the attention of the author of *The Shepherd's Rod* was called to this direct contradiction, he did not deny it, but claimed that his interpretation should be accepted because Sister White did not have the complete light on the subject." – *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*, p. 42.

This allegation deals either in fabrication or misconstruction, for at no time have we made any such statement, neither indeed could have made it, as we believe the *Rod* to be in perfect harmony with the writings of Sister White. Therefore we hope that for their own sakes the committee will be honorable enough to correct this misrepresentation.

Now we direct the reader's attention to what *The Great Controversy* teaches concerning the inception of the wound, for the *Reply* deals with *The Great Controversy* in the same treacherous manner as it does with *The Shepherd's Rod*. In this instance, it omits the book's entire extensive historical treatment of the subject, which shows the infliction of the wound as the result, not of an single momentary act, but rather of an extended series of events, as glimpsed in the following passages:

" '..A serious struggle [said Luther] has just begun. Hitherto I have been only playing with the pope. I began this work in God's name; it will be ended

without me, and by His might.' "

" '…I put forward God's word; I preached and wrote – this was all I did. And yet while I was asleep,…the word that I had preached *overthrew popery*, so that neither prince nor emperor has done it so much harm.' "

"…the wisdom of popes, kings, and prelates had been brought to naught by the power of truth. The papacy had sustained a defeat which would be felt among all nations and in all ages."

" '…An immense revolution had thus been effected by Luther's instrumentality. Rome was already *descending* from her throne, and it was the *voice* of a monk that caused this humiliation'." – *The Great Controversy*, pp. 142, 190, 162, 155.

"The calm, dignified power of Luther humbled his enemies, and dealt a most dreadful *blow* to the papacy." – *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 373.

"…through divine aid he [Luther] was enabled to shake the vast power of Rome, so that in every country the foundation of the papacy trembled." – *Gospel Workers*, old edition, p. 428.

With these statements before us, we are now ready properly to evaluate the passage:

"At that time [1798], the pope was made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, 'He

that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.' " – *The Great Controversy*, p. 439.

This statement says that verse 10 of Revelation 13 ("He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity"), and not verse 3 ("wounded to death"), was fulfilled in 1798! An interpretation other than this cannot be made without disregarding all the aforequoted statements on the subject. The Bible, moreover, plainly shows that the taking of the pope captive was not what inflicted the wound, for whereas the pope never recovered from his captivity, but died in it, the "head" did recover from its wound and lived.

Still further, John saw the event of verse 3 (the wounding of the head) take place before the one of verse 10 (the taking captive of the pope). The wound to the head, therefore, represents the blow as inflicted by the Protestant Reformation.

In another misrepresentation, the committee says: "It is claimed that Luther at that time (1500 A.D.) gave the deadly wound." – *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*, p. 43. But we earnestly ask all who love the Third Angel's Message, to look into this important matter, and see for themselves that the *Rod* does not teach the blow was delivered in 1500 as they are trying to make the laity believe it teaches, but rather *after* 1500. (Read *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 1. pp. 209-222, and Vol. 2, pp. 85-107.)

In pages six and eight, the *Reply* conveys the idea

that it is a reply to the "Harvest Study," which was presented to the "committee of twelve," and that it is in compliance with the Fullerton agreement. The truth, though is that the committee never replied to the "Harvest' study (our tract No. 3) itself, but endeavored to silence with a sort of super-stroke all the publications of *The Shepherd's Rod*. Indeed, the very title of the booklet acknowledges that it is "*A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*," and not to the "Harvest" study.

Since the agreement, moreover, called for five studies to be presented within a week if the first one could not be refuted, it was necessary that the first study be replied to within twenty-four hours. But notwithstanding the agreement, over six hundred hours passed before the reply was rendered! And even then, as shown, it was not a reply to the study given.

In view of this fact which puts the committee in default of their signed commitment, our position is automatically vindicated, and their own impeached, reducing to naught the following charge:

"We have accepted your challenge to prove *The Shepherd's Rod* doctrine wrong…. Now there comes to you a challenge not issued by us but by the simplest principles of honor and honesty;… Will the author now resort to the 'deceptive policies' and 'windings and twistings and turnings' of 'error'…or will he step forward honestly and honorably and make

good his pledge:…" – *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*, pp. 37, 49.

By the method which they have used – disproving one person's writings by comparison with another's – any two books of the Bible can be made to contradict each other. Furthermore, the following example will sufficiently demonstrate that not only can the writings of any two persons, though in perfect harmony, be made to clash, but that also the writings of any one person can be made to appear self-contradictory. Take for example the following two statements from Sister White's writings:

"There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth: and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new Scriptures, without first submitting it to the brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for 'in the multitude of counselors there is safety.'" – *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 293

"*Every soul* must look to God with contrition and humility that He may guide and lead and bless. We must not trust to others to search the Scripture for us. Some of our leading brethren have frequently taken their position on the *wrong side*; and if God would send a message and wait for these older brethren to open the way for its advancement, it would *never reach* the people.

"Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible *for themselves*, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the *leading men*, and accept the decisions *they make*; and *thus* many will *reject* the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them." – *Gospel Workers*, p. 303; *Testimony to Ministers*, pp. 106, 107.

From this example, we can see very quickly that though two passages be inspired by the same Spirit,

yet, when treacherously manipulated, they can easily be made to collide with each other. However, when the author's object in making the statement is first considered in every case, then and then only can one rightly interpret his thought, and find it trouble-free. In specific demonstration of this general truth, we call the reader's attention to the following brief analysis of the much overworked and misused statement in *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 293, concerning new light:

"There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for 'in the multitude of counselors there is safety.' "

The conditions which called forth the statement were that Brother D_____, through claiming light, instead had darkness which, rather than lighting up, only darkened the message which came through the *Spirit of Prophecy*. In view of this fact, the "brethren of experience" of whom she is speaking are seen to be none other than the founding fathers of the S.D.A. denomination, those who shared with Sister White in the singular experience of establishing the message point by point, and not those who subsequently fol-

lowed on to proclaim it.

Clearly, then, the only possible way in which these "brethren of experience" can be consulted at the present time is by giving heed to the voice which they left on record in their own written testimonies and in those especially of their leader and God's spokesman, Sister White. The "angel" of the Laodiceans, who is "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," obviously is not to be sought for counsel, but rather ministered to with instruction.

Accordingly the committee of twelve, and all the rest of the leading brethren as well, must humbly and implicitly accept the word of the inspired writings for the church in their full setting if they each would echo the voice of experience and truth. Had they done this, the Lord would not have made the denunciatory statement: "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth." Rev. 3:16. In other words, though they do not occupy the same position as did the "brethren of experience" mentioned in *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 293, and are now in a perilous condition, yet had they exercised the same judgment and the same spirit as did the latter, they would now be safe counselors, deserving the same respect.

This truth is further demonstrated by the fact that if the statement from *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, means what our leading brethren would have us think it means,

then John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, the Apostles, Luther, the Reformers, William Miller, and Sister White in 1844 and again in 1888, were all, one after another dead wrong, for not one of them respected the decisions of their leading brethren who in their respective times were popularly acclaimed to be the "brethren of experience," and who having seen no light in the messages, denounced them and the messengers. And Sister White never yielded to their judgment when they opposed her.

Moreover, had she intended the statement in question to mean what the committee says it means, she never would have written what she did in *Gospel Workers*, p. 303 and in *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 106,107, both of which are out of joint with their private interpretation of *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 293. Obviously, therefore, in fighting the *Rod* on such untenable ground, they are unwittingly missing their mark, and hitting the *Spirit of Prophecy* instead – and thus are blinding, frightening, and confusing the laity. Brother, Sister, "Choose ye this day" whom ye will "follow" – God's messengers or the leading men.

The *Rod* does not stretch to a breaking point any one statement on a given subject, while wholly ignoring other statements bearing on it, but instead considers every relevant one. Upon this principle which the committee utterly ignored, the only possible harmonious interpretation which they can place

upon *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 293, is that they themselves, along with all the rest of their brethren, must not inject into anyone's message a private view here and a private view there before first submitting such views to the one through whom the message came, just as the *Spirit of Prophecy* directs: "If a message comes that you do not understand, take pains that you may hear the reason the messenger may give," and not the reasons the ministers may give. (See *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, p. 65.)

Having by precept and by example commanded every man to remove the beam from his own eye before attempting to "pull out the mote" from his brother's eye (Matt. 7:4), the Master has thereby shown that the church must not say to others, "Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye;" when "behold, a beam is in [her] own eye." Hence, we are in solemn duty bound to turn the searchlight upon the S.D.A. denomination (ourselves), not upon other denominations (our brother). Following the Master's instructions, we are therefore herein looking, not into the individual eye, but into the collective S.D.A. –

The Denominational Eye.

In explanation of Isaiah 4:1, the denominational publication (not only published and owned by the denomination, but also indorsed and used by the Sabbath School Department throughout the world in

1928), *Isaiah, the Gospel Prophet*, Vol. 1, p. 28, says:

"Seven women, one man. Seven is the complete number. 'Women' represents a church (Rev. 12:1, 2; 17:3), but in this case not the true or pure church for there is a reproach. How true it is today that the churches will not accept the bread that came down from heaven, but rather eat their own food – the traditions of men. They want the name, but reject the garment which Christ provides, and hence will be found at last without the wedding garment."

Though in 1928, through the Sabbath School publication, *Isaiah, the Gospel Prophet*, the denomination officially taught the foregoing interpretation of Isaiah 4:1, yet in 1931, through the general church paper, the *Review and Herald*, she just as officially taught an entirely different interpretation; to wit:

"It is generally understood that this is a figurative description of conditions that would prevail in Israel because of wars in which so many of the men would be killed that there would be a large preponderance of women. We are not to seek for mathematical exactness in such matters of Biblical prophecy.

"We would not be understood as seeking to find the fulfillment of this prophecy in the War of 1914-1918, but it is true, nevertheless, that in several of the countries of Europe the women greatly outnum-

ber the men, because millions of men lost their lives in that titanic struggle. This is a condition that may be repeated in that great war that even now threatens the world." – *Review and Herald*, June 11, 1931.

We shall not attempt here to explain Isaiah 4:1, but we do request the General Conference to tell us which interpretation we should believe, the former or the latter. For, being in disagreement, they both cannot be right, and hence to indorse either or both would be to give sanction to hypothesizing, with the consequence that instead of helping our leading brethren to depart from this perilous course, we would only be confirming and advancing them in it.

Those who let others think and investigate for them instead of investigating for themselves, and who thus accept the decisions of the leading brethren (who claim to be "the men of experience"), must, if asked what they believe on the subject of Isaiah 4:1, in all honesty answer, We know not what we believe.

The next double interpretation involves on the one hand, the booklet entitled, *Forty Years in the Wilderness*, by Taylor G. Bunch, and on the other hand, the *Review and Herald*, June 1, 1930, in an article entitled, *A Forty-One Year Comparison*, by H.E. Rogers, the denominational statistical secretary. Elder Taylor Bunch, in his booklet, teaches that from 1888 (since the denomination's rejection of the message of "Righteousness by Faith") to 1928, forty years,

the S.D.A. Denomination repeated the wilderness experience of ancient Israel.

As this booklet was written by a General Conference employee, and was widely circulated among the people, there is no need quoting from it. Its title, *Forty Years in the Wilderness*, speaks for itself.

Now we turn to Elder Rogers' article, which says: "Some opponents of this cause claim that the denomination since the Minneapolis conference, in 1888, has been 'wandering around in the wilderness'….

"If 'wandering around in the wilderness' means to multiply the membership of the denomination by more than ten, to increase the number of workers more than fifty times,…the denomination can plead guilty to the charge."

Thus by another two-way position, the General Conference has again forced us to challenge them to come out with a forthright and definite statement as to which of the two interpretations on the same subject they would have us believe, seeing that we cannot believe both and yet know what we believe. If Elder Taylor G. Bunch, as the *Review and Herald* tacitly charges, is teaching error and is the "opponent" of the "cause," why, then, did the General Conference not only tolerate his views, but also even pay him while he was writing them, and then indorse their circulation! On the other hand, if Brother H.F. Rogers has not written the truth on the subject, then

he is misrepresenting not only the Truth, but also the General Conference and the denominational ministry, and is therefore unfit for his office and unworthy of his hire. But the S.D.A. ministry continue to retain both workers as members in acceptable standing!

Moreover, in their determined effort to refute the teachings of the *Rod*, the committee emphatically maintain that the blow which caused the "deadly wound" on one of the heads of the leopard-like beast (Rev. 13) was delivered by Berthier, the French general, in 1798. And in support of this position, they invoke *The Great Controversy*, p. 439. (See *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*, p. 42.) But in its official missionary organ, the Denomination teaches that "the 'deadly wound' here forecast found its fulfillment in the *Protestant Reformation*, in the French Revolution, and culminated in the apparently mortal thrust at the very heart of the papacy when the pope was deposed and imprisoned by the French in 1798." – *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 30, 1934, p. 6. (Italics ours.)

Thus we are carried still farther out on the sea of the ministry's theological inconsisten-cies, and left to decide for ourselves which boat will take us to port, the *Signs of the Times*, or the *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*.

As the *Reply* has already been fatally punctured in several places, and is in a sinking condition, and as the *Signs of the Times* in its aforequoted statement is

in perfect harmony with *The Shepherd's Rod*'s teachings in this connection, one need not think twice as to which affords deliverance from the plight in which the Denomination has placed us on this subject. It is plain for any one to see that the *Reply* is fatally leaky, and that it will take down with it all who cling to it.

Again: if, as the *Reply* charges, *The Shepherd's Rod*'s teaching concerning the wound, is heresy, and the Denomination is determined to rid the church of it, then why, pray tell us, have they spent the Lord's money and time to teach the same heresy in the *Signs of the Times*!

Thus, while on the one hand thousands of copies of the *Reply* are crying out in the negative, on the other hand thousands of copies of the *Signs of the Times* and *The Pope King Again* are crying out in the affirmative, on the question, Did the Protestant Reformation inflict the deadly wound?

Any wonder, then, that the laity is in perplexity and confusion as to which voice to heed, as to which way to turn? Any wonder that in order to rescue them from their dilemma, "the Lord's voice crieth unto the city…hear ye the rod, and Who hath appointed it"? Only the voice of the *Rod* can resolve the issue. "The man of wisdom" will "hear" its voice.

These trumpet-tongued evidences should awaken the laity from their slumber, to a thorough personal investigation of the various issues at stake. And cer-

tain it is that those who will not be thus aroused are hopelessly indifferent into what hands they commit their priceless crown of life. Indeed, these experiential evidence should enable all to realize that their hope in a Noah, a Job, or a Daniel to lead them into the heavenly Canaan, will end in bitter disappointment and disaster instead of life and glory everlasting.

We deeply regret that our brethren have so involved themselves against the Truth that we have been compelled to expose their subversive efforts. Were not our only aim for God's honor, for the good of these brethren and for all His people, we would never make the facts public, but the solemn time, "the days of purification" (*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 80), to which our church is come, compels us to "Cry aloud, spare not," and to obey the command: "Lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. 58:1.

"The truth in all its pointed severity must be spoken. Men of action are needed, – men who will labor with earnest, ceaseless energy for the purifying of the church and the warning of the world." – *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 187.

Hence we now address a word

To The Committee Of Twelve.

Dear Brethren:

Though you have challenged and brought into question our integrity, we care not to protest the per-

sonal aspect of the reflection. Indeed, the facts herein unmasking your challenge and exposing it in its true character, so completely strip it of any force as to make useless our further meeting it, in defense of Truth, with any measure other than the counter-challenge: Clearly prove us wrong in the same forthright and evidential manner in which we have herein proved you wrong, *then* try us and see whether or not we "make good" our "pledge." Or, if you are so pressed for time as to feel unable critically to examine the other SRod volumes, then let the few pages of this little booklet suffice as "Exhibit A" upon which to build your case. "Produce your strong reasons." "Come now, and let us reason together." But we, as brethren, would earnestly caution you not to resort again to those artful "escapist" tactics which wholly vitiate *A Reply to The Shepherd's Rod*. Demonstrate us in error, brethren, and you will be astonished to see how quickly we shall retract and destroy all our publications, even though you continue to cherish other inconsistencies. You see, we are not asking the unreasonable, but only that which in common sense and duty you would be bound to demand were you in our place.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. 7:12.

Now, think not that in these pages there comes to

you merely a "challenge." No indeed; but rather a sincere plea actuated by the Lord's merciful forewarning of the terrible tragedy approaching His beloved church. Dreadful surprise! It burdens us to cry out with him who loved his brethren's souls above his own: "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen" in Him. Rom. 9:2, 3.

Again Says the *Spirit of Prophecy:*

"Even Seventh-day Adventists are in danger of closing their eyes to truth as it is in Jesus, because it contradicts something which they have taken for granted as truth, but which the Holy Spirit teaches is not truth…. But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men, and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men, and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them." Says Satan: "The people accept their ministers' explanations of Scripture, and do not investigate for themselves. Therefore by working through the ministers, I can control the people according to my will." – *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 70, 106, 107, 473. This warning testimony urges

A Word To The Laity:

As firm believers in the Third Angel's Message and the 1844 movement, we most earnestly appeal to you, Brethren, at this critical moment, not to accept the decisions of others or to sanction their accusations against us without making thorough personal investigation of the message in *The Shepherd's Rod*, which has come to you "in the name of the Lord." (See *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, p. 65.)

"Men, women, and youth, God requires you to possess moral courage, steadiness of purpose, fortitude and perseverance, minds that cannot take the assertions of another, but which will investigate for themselves before receiving or rejecting, that will study and weigh evidence, and take it to the Lord in prayer." – *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 130.

Do not, we implore you, repeat the mistakes of the Jewish nation and of the nominal Christian churches by condemning or rejecting without giving *equal* attention to both sides. If the leading brethren approach you with objections to your making a personal investigation of the message, do not acquiesce until they have given you a more logical and convincing exposition than does the *Rod*, on the subject in question.

Indifference in this matter on the part of the laity has encouraged the leading brethren to exercise an imperious, cruel spirit by which they have brought

disgrace upon the church of God. It caused us once even to be summoned before the city magistrate, and then afterwards, because the charges preferred against us failed to stand, thus depriving our accusers of the arm of the law with which to cast us out of the churches, it led them to take the reins in their own hands, and on four occasions bodily (on two of them violently) to carry some of us out of the church building. At another time, it led them to have Brother Houteff arrested, but in vain, for the authorities, after questioning both sides found him guiltless, and ordered the same officers who took him to the police station to take him right back to the church where they picked him up, to the further humiliation and anger of his accusers. Then on another occasion, it stirred them to slap his face; and on still another, ruthlessly to batter his head and face until black and blue. After this latter attack, by a long time backslider whom they had stationed at the door as a watchman to keep us out, the prevailing sentiment of the multitude was, "Perhaps *now* he will stay away!"

Then still later, this same spirit whipped them on so far that they tried to have him confined to a psychopathic ward, and failing in this also, then on even until they attempted to have him deported, again with no success but only greater humiliation and more ruthless anger to themselves.

Most shameful of all their actions, though, was that of the minister who, after the service on the Sab-

bath that Brother Houteff was brutally manhandled, said, in justification of this criminal act, "Why don't you stay away if they do not want you around here," proceeding then to invoke as Scriptural basis for his protest, the words: "And when ye come into an house, salute it. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." Matt. 10:12, 14. Shameless perversion of scripture in shameful defense of wrong!

In Christ's plain words in the foregoing scripture, He simply enjoins His followers, as any honest Bible reader will admit, to go out and stay out only if and when they are not welcome in a house (home), but not when ejected from the temple (church). This is attested by the following experience:

The apostles were "in Solomon's porch." "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him,…were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison

to have them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within. Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow. Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:12, 17-29.

In contrast to this record, the violence-condoning words spoken by the minister that Sabbath shows just how he would have regarded Peter had he lived in Peter's time. Similarly with the church elder, who while in the pulpit that Sabbath, as we later learned, Pilate-like washed his hands of any responsibility for what had occurred, charging that we had called them names (which is proved untrue by the simple

fact that they would have quickly reported us had it been true), and that that was why the backslidden watchman had lost his temper. Thus does the multitude today as did the multitude in Christ's time, in justifying the wicked and condemning the righteous, cry out: "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas."

A short time after the assault, the injured one's condition demanded medical attention, so an S.D.A. doctor, who was at church that morning and who afterwards witnessed the bruises, was summoned to the telephone, and after much hesitating, reluctantly agreed to come, but never did!

It makes us sad to see in the actions of our own brethren such an exact fulfillment of the parable (Luke 10:25-37) of the "priest" and the "Levite" who passed by an injured brother, wounded by highwaymen of their own nation, thus bringing upon themselves "curses," and causing the "blessings" to fall to the lot of the good Samaritan – today the kind-hearted outside the S.D.A. denomination.

Then some time later, a brother who, being refused admittance to the church, was quietly standing at a window, listening to the lesson, had a glass of water dashed in his face from inside. On another occasion, at another S.D.A. church, this same brother, though being disabled, was, simply because of his presence, savagely kicked (by one of the local elders) and

knocked down in the rain and mud on the church sidewalk; while on still another occasion at a sister church and for the same reason, he was (by the minister this time) roughly jerked from his seat, where he had been sitting in perfect quiet, and bodily dragged from the church and plumped in a heap on the outer sidewalk! And these actions are but a sample of the many just like them taken by the church against brothers and sisters because of their desire to be better S.D.A.'s. Yes, it is unbelievable, but it is true, nevertheless.

Not only do they reveal an unChrist-like Spirit, but also they constitute serious criminal offenses, committed against us for no reason other than our refusing to stop attending Sabbath services in our churches! Though we eschew sympathy in this respect, we do with utmost urgency cry out for assistance against this tide of evil which, if continued, will, whether we be right or wrong, dash to pieces our brethren's presumptuous expectations resulting for them in a more fearful disaster and a greater disappointment than resulted to the Jews from their self-assured and self-complacent hope of the continuance of their kingdom.

Moreover, to attempt to drive us by force from our churches, then brand us as "off-shoots," is an ironical paradox, the justice of which neither we can understand nor they explain.

Furthermore, for them to persist in accusing us of calling the church Babylon, when they know all too well that we not only cannot be driven from the denomination, thus proving that we do not *call* it Babylon, but also that our every publication proves that it cannot be Babylon, – thus for them to persist in this accusation is to engage themselves in misrepresenting us to the people and tempting us to commit wrong – leave the denomination.

When you know you are right with God, – walking in the light, – be firm and unswerving. Do not compromise the Truth in order to get over the mountain, but rather stand immovably for the right and let your faith remove the mountain to yonder places. And if an opposer of the Truth attempt to bind you to a certain course, yield not, for his is the dictates of the natural heart. Resist and do the opposite, then you will be safe. And above all, stay in your church, keep the truth, and "sigh and cry for the abominations that be done in the midst thereof," for thus shall ye be sealed and defeat the enemy.

So for the sake of the Third Angel's Message for your own salvation, for God's honor, and for the principles of religious freedom, let not your silence lend consent to the church's shameful treatment of its own members, thus bringing upon you "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Able" unto the present time. We urge you therefore to protest against such Pharisaical and

Romanistic practices. And may you be even further thus urged as you read the ensuing

Personal Testimony.

"At the close of a service conducted by a field secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist in one of our city churches, Brother Houteff was asking the speaker of the evening a question on some statement which he had made from the pulpit in opposition to the teachings of *The Shepherd's Rod*. Without warning or conversation of any kind, a man approached him from the rear, took him by the neck and shoulders, and thrust him from the building. But what was worse, the offender was not even an Adventist; in fact, his mother said he was not even a Christian! Now what incited this poor man to commit such an unprovoked and unlawful act? What, if not the false accusations from the pulpit, made against Brother Houteff? For up to that moment Brother Houteff had never met the man or even spoken to him, and there had been no excitement whatever, but only quite friendly reasoning on the part of the conversers.

"Shortly after this experience, Brother Houteff and I, along with another brother, attended a Sabbath service in another one of our churches, and this time the president of the conference spoke in opposition to *The Shepherd's Rod*.

"At the close of this service, a lady approached Brother Houteff and spoke to him as he stood with a number of others in front of the building, and before he had time to reply to her, a young man, also whom Brother Houteff had never seen before, rushed up to him, rolled up his sleeves, and threatened to smash the glasses off his face if he did not stop talking to his mother! But some one led him away, and his mother, too, said he was not an Adventist. What could have put such hatred in the heart of *this* young man? What except the sermon which he heard from the pulpit? For up to that moment neither one had in all his life seen or spoken to the other!

"A third incident very similar to the ones related above came to my attention, all within a period of four weeks. This time the president of the Union Conference, had on Sabbath afternoon called a large congregation together, many miles away from either of the churches mentioned above, to hear him refute *The Shepherd's Rod*. During the service, he conducted himself in such a way as to instil in the hearts of all his hearers hatred for the author of the message contained in *The Shepherd's Rod* series of books and tracts. After the meeting closed, a group of young people were gathered around Brother Houteff outside the church, near an embankment. Suddenly a young man rushed up to the crowd and thrust himself as hard as he could upon the one nearest Brother Houteff in an effort to knock him over the

embankment. And he would have verily succeeded had Brother Houteff not been quick enough to catch himself in time to avoid pitching over head-long!

"Again we are led to inquire, What put such hatred into the heart of *this* young man who also had never met Brother Houteff? What, save the sermon he had just heard?

" 'Satan's attacks against the advocates of the truth will wax more bitter and determined to the very close of time. As in Christ's day the chief priests and rulers stirred up the people against Him, so today the religious leaders will excite bitterness and prejudice against the truth for this time. The people will be led to acts of violence and opposition which they would never have thought of had they not been imbued with the animosity of professed Christians against the truth.' " – *Gospel Workers*, p. 324.

"No one can afford to fail to profit by these experiences or to make certain that no root of bitterness finds soil in his heart. No matter what others may do, he who is sighing and crying against the 'abominations that be done in the midst thereof,' must maintain unfeigned love for the brethren and thus walk in the footsteps of Him Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again."

— E.T. Wilson.

The Lot of Every Scribe Who Brings Things New and Old Matt. 13:52.

This brief recital of abuses by our brethren gives only a glimpse of what they are doing throughout the churches. It is ample, however, to make clear the baleful results of their activities, not the least common or deplorable of which is the influencing of many to take the position that it is wrong to accept a message if the leading brethren are opposed to it! Though these find an assortment of excuses for their carnal position the truth is that while some fear being cast out of the synagogue, others hate to bear the reproach, despite Christ's comforting charge: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out *your name* as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Luke 6:22, 23.

Just as did the Jews of old, thousands today dearly believe that there is a certain saving magic simply in membership in the church, thus letting themselves be brought to prize and depend upon it more than upon the message, which demands repentance of sins and in return lifts the penitent sinner from the dark and miry pit, into the healing, saving light of Pres-

ent Truth. Had these worshipers of temples made by hands, lived in the days of Christ, they would have shown their utter ignorance of and disregard for the Truth, by rejecting the respective messages of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the apostles, in order to maintain their membership in the "synagogue" and to shun the reproach they would otherwise have been called upon to bear. Whereas God's true people have always bound themselves to new and unpopular truths which, while new, the self-styled men "of experience" have denounced as heresies.

Let each seriously inquire of himself as to whether he would have given heed to the teachings of John, Christ, the Apostles, Luther, the Reformers, William Miller, and Sister White, at the cost of having been cast out in each instance for thus following the Lamb whithersoever He went, or whether he would have safeguarded his church membership irrespective of consequences. Only by pursuing the former course could he have walked with God as did Enoch of old. And only by pursuing that course now, can he thus walk with God today.

Perilous as it always is blindly to accept the opinions of others, far more so is it to lean for salvation upon man's uninspired decisions, especially when the authors of them are refusing to open the church's doors to a message that is knocking for entrance. And though God has warned the laity time and again

that "the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed" (Isa. 9:16), yet in every advance of Truth, they have repeated these mistakes!

We are greatly burdened, therefore, that now, in the end of the world, God's people, having all the experiences of the past before them as an admonition, take heed to His Word by investigating for themselves and by making their own decisions, as many of us had to do when we joined the Advent movement against the will of the ministers of our former churches.

So our fervent prayer and hope is that our brethren will not repeat the history of the Jewish nation, or the history of the Christian church in the days of Luther, the Reformation, William Miller, and Sister White, in the respective times of which the leading men of the contemporaneous sects denounced as heresy the messages of Truth. For today, as since time began, the message from God to the church must inevitably sound surpassingly strange and foreign. Says the *Spirit of Prophecy*: "Precious truths that have long been in obscurity are to be revealed in a light that will make manifest their sacred worth; for God will glorify His Word, that it may appear in a light in which we have never before beheld it." – *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, p. 62.

Moreover, His messengers of today will bear no greater credentials of their calling than did those of ages past. Even Jesus Christ with His supernatural birth, sinless life, and miraculous works was condemned by the leading men of His time, who said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." Matt. 12:24.

The laity of that time thought no less of their great men than do the laity of today. Neither were the leaders of ancient Israel less pious than the leaders of our time. Our leading men today have already proved themselves untrustworthy by their action against the message of 1888, which was not backed up by a "fellow" whom they knew not whence he came, but by the servant of God whom, since the beginning of the S.D.A. movement, they had acknowledged to be a prophet. Accordingly, finding it so easy to decide against her who had long been with them, then, think you, how exceedingly much easier for them to decide against a messenger of today whom they had not known before!

"Opposition is the lot of all whom God employs to present truths specially applicable to their time. There was a present truth in the days of Luther, – a truth at that time of special importance; there is a present truth for the church today." "Different periods in the history of the church have each been marked by the development of some special truth, adapted to the necessities of God's people at that

time. Every new truth has made its way against hatred and opposition; those who were blessed with its light were tempted and tried. The Lord gives a special truth for the people in an emergency. Who dare refuse to publish it?"

"…The true followers of Christ…do not wait for truth to become popular. Being convinced of their duty, they deliberately accept the cross."

"The half-hearted and superficial could no longer lean upon the faith of their brethren."

"Instead of questioning and caviling concerning that which they do not understand, let them give heed to the light which already shines upon them, and they will receive greater light."

"There has ever been a class professing godliness, who, instead of following on to know the truth, make it their religion to seek some fault of character or error of faith in those with whom they do not agree. Such are Satan's right-hand helpers."

"All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon, will find them. And those who refuse to accept and obey God's word until every objection has been removed, and there is no longer an opportunity for doubt, will never come to the light." – *The Great Controversy*, pp. 143, 609, 460, 395, 528, 519, 527. Going on in their own blind, doubting course, they

naturally fall into mischief, which they excuse as mistakes. Therefore, Brethren, in conclusion, consider the question:

What Is To Be Gained Or Lost?

The course being pursued by the church is taking her with the drift of the world, instead of toward the haven of her eternal home. Her institutions – schools, sanitariums, etc. – have compromised with the institutions of the world, the very danger against which the *Spirit of Prophecy* has so long warned:

"What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right, when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception." – *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, pp. 252, 253.

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed Heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing, and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders.

"The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader, and is steadily retreating toward Egypt.

Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power." – *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 217.

"Who can truthfully say, 'Our gold is tried in the fire; our garments are unspotted by the world'? I saw our Instructor pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath. Then He said to me: 'Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? "How is the faithful city become an harlot?" My Father's house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed! For this cause there is weakness, and strength is lacking.' " – *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 250.

"Page after page might be written in regard to these things. Whole conferences are becoming leavened with the same perverted principles. 'For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.' The Lord will work to purify His church. I tell you in truth, the Lord is about to turn and overturn in the institutions called by His name.

"Just how soon this refining process will begin, I can not say, but it will not be long deferred. He whose fan is in His hand will cleanse His temple of its moral defilement. He will thoroughly purge His floor." – *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 372, 373.

The foregoing inspired statements concerning the condition of the church, reveal, as does the message to the Laodiceans, that it is a critically serious one, which makes necessary the Lord's sending reproofs and warnings, calling for a decided reformation, which will result either in reforming her, and thus causing God to accept her, or in hardening her, and thus causing Him to spue her "out of His mouth." Rev. 3:16. "Let ministers and people remember that the gospel truth ruins if it does not save." – *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 134. Consequently, our salvation, our fitness for His eternal kingdom, lies in our accepting the message which the Lord sends us.

We who have studied the message contained in *The Shepherd's Rod* are just as deeply convinced that it is the "message of the True Witness" "to the Laodiceans," which finds God's people in a "sad deception," as we are of the Sabbath or any other truth ever known to the church. And indeed we should be, for it has opened to our understanding chapter after chapter of the Scriptures, the meaning of which we hitherto had not the faintest idea, but which we now understand as plainly as we do any plain Bible truth. Through the message, we now see that the prophecies of these chapters (Isaiah's, Ezekiel's, Hosea's, Joel's, Micah's Zechariah's, Daniel's, The Revelations's, etc.) focus on this time, and shine out in wondrous beauty. It has multiplied to us the proof

that the Seventh-day Adventist denomination is the church of God, thus strengthening more than ever, if possible, our determination to stay in it regardless of its condition. And as a consequence it has established us more solidly than ever in the Third Angel's Message, causing us to have greater love for the brethren. Then, finally, it has driven us to study the Bible and the *Spirit of Prophecy* as never before.

Without reading for oneself the publications of the *Rod*, one cannot know the wonderful change they make in the lives of all who truly accept them, nor can one appreciate the wonders of the prophecies which they reveal, many of which, heretofore, men have never even attempted to explain. No human wisdom could possibly unlock these mysteries of God which have been hidden for ages from the wise and prudent. Those who have not for themselves made "a thorough investigation" of the message which the *Rod* contains, and which has come "in the name of the Lord," the *Spirit of Prophecy* counsels them not to say: "I am satisfied with my position. I have set my stakes, and I will not be moved away from my position, whatever may come. I will not listen to the message of this messenger; for I know that it can not be truth." – *Testimonies on Sabbath-School Work*, p. 65.

Clearly, those who by word or action contend that they know more about *The Shepherd's Rod* than do we who have carefully studied it, are not only stultifying their own intelligence, but also insulting ours. Moreover, in judging and condemning without hearing, they are violating the laws of common justice, and are despising the counsel of the Lord and placing themselves above His Throne!

"It was from pursuing this very course that the popular churches were left in partial darkness, and that is why the messages of heaven have not reached them…. There is no virtue or manliness in keeping up a continual warfare in the dark, closing your eyes lest you may see, closing your ears lest you may hear, hardening your heart in ignorance and unbelief lest you may have to humble yourselves and acknowledge that you have received light on some points of truth. To hold yourselves aloof from an investigation of truth is not the way to carry out the Saviour's injunction to "search the Scriptures". Is it digging for hidden treasures to call the results of someone's labor a mass of rubbish, and make no critical examination to see whether or not there are precious jewels of truth in the collection of thought which you condemn?" – *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 65, 66.

So, as to implement his constant purpose of keeping Christendom beset with false teachers, the Devil

is causing every wind of doctrine to blow in every direction. One after another he keeps these teachers shooting upward, like plants in the shade, only to wither when exposed to the sun. Thus keeping ever prominent the bad example of them and of their followers, he effectively discourages and frightens all who have the disposition to investigate any purported light on the Scriptures, thereby preparing them to reject the very message of Truth whenever God may send it.

When, therefore, "a message comes to you in the name of the Lord," if you, because of the delusive messages which the enemy has brought in the past, refuse to investigate for yourself, saying, "There is no use, it is simply another 'off shoot'; I know it cannot be the truth"; then, whether it be the *Rod* or some other publication which contains the message, certain it is that sooner or later, you will reject the very message you need to save you from the Laodicean sad deception.

Thus ever keeping before the church his master bug-bear, "off-shoots," the old Deceiver is accomplishing his diabolic design of betraying many into rejecting the light that is to lighten the whole earth.

We know that the Lord is speaking to His people at this very time through the publications of *The Shepherd's Rod*; that the message they contain is that

which "will cause a shaking among God's people" (*Early Writings*, p. 270); that those who accept this counsel of the True Witness will receive the seal of God and be numbered among the 144,000 (*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, p. 266); that those who reject it, will fall in the slaughter of Ezekiel 9 (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 445; *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 211) and Isaiah 66:16; and that those who "escape of them," the 144,000, the first fruits, are to be the servants of God in the time of the Loud Cry (Rev. 14:4; *Testimonies*, Vol. 5 pp. 80, 81) to bring the second fruits out of "all nations." Isa. 66:19, 20.

Therefore, Brethren, as we have "full assurance of faith" that our knowledge, judgment, and faith in the S.D.A. doctrines are as sound as yours, and as you know not our position as well as we know yours, there is at least as much chance of our being right as there is of your being right. So for your own soul's sake, you dare not refuse to investigate. If you close your ears to the voice of the True Witness, it will mean your eternal ruin! This is why our hearts are troubled, why we are concerned that you investigate for yourselves, the message of the *Rod*. And if you are a "man of wisdom" who heeds "the Lord's voice…unto the city," you will "hear…the Rod," and know "Who hath appointed it." Mic. 6:9.

We have unloaded our responsibility. Now you must shoulder yours, and exercise your God-given

ability and duty to make sure your eternal reward. Risk not your crown of life on a peradventure, on any possibility of losing out after being years in the message. What a loss, tragic loss, "world without end" that would be! Accept this counsel and obey its demands, and your obedience will secure unto you peace and joy and life everlasting.

"…If a message comes that you do not understand," counsels the *Spirit of Prophecy*, "take pains that you may hear the reasons the *messenger* may give, comparing scripture with scripture, that you may know whether or not it is sustained by the Word of God. If you believe that the positions taken have not the Word of God for their foundation, if the position you hold on the subject can not be controverted, then produce your strong reasons; for your position will not be shaken by coming in contact with error." – *Testimonies on Sabbath-School Work*, pp. 65, 66.

"But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men, and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them." – *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 106, 107.

Note: The guide numbers given in the following article, correspond to the list of references given below. And the key to abbreviations is the same as in the *Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*.

(1) T.M. 468. (2) C.O.R. 67; *Review and Herald*, May 27, 1890. (3) T.M. 80; T.M. 300. (4) 5 T 209. (5) 6 T 17. (6) T.S.S.W. 65. (7) 9 T 126. (8) T.M. 514, 515; C.O.R. 154. (9) Isa. 58:1; T.S.S.W. 56. (10) E.W. 270. (11) T.M. 445, 3 T 266; 5 T 211. (12) 5 T 136, 81; 3 T 267; 1 T 187. (13) 5 T 80; G.C. 425. (14) E.W. 270; 3 T 252, 253. (15) Rev. 3:14-19. (16) E.W. 276, 277; P.K. 725. (17) T.S.S.W. 65.

With the fervent prayer that the Lord have His way with all of us, we, as a body of workers, speak

To All Seventh-day Adventists — Greetings!

Beloved Brethren:

WHEREAS, We who are standing in the advancing light of the Third Angel's Message have, as did those who accepted Present Truth in all ages, had our actions misunderstood, our motives impugned and our message misapprehended, "slighted spoken against, ridiculed, rejected," and "denounced," as "leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism" (1);and

WHEREAS, Because the "light which will lighten the earth with its glory" (2), is now being called a

"false light" (3), it has become necessary to define clearly our position in connection with the closing work of the Third Angel's Message; and

WHEREAS, Believing that order and system are the first laws of heaven, and realizing that to those who are "standing in the light" (4), there has come an imperative need for some form of counsel regarding their activities in the church throughout the world;

Therefore, as a united body of believers in the message of Present Truth, as contained in the publications of *The Shepherd's Rod* (which we believe have come in response to divine enlightenment, and are the "unrolling of the scroll" (5), in perfect harmony with the Third Angel's Message as set forth in the Bible and *Testimonies for the Church*, we herewith declare:

Be it *Resolved*, That we direct our full support to the proclamation of Present Truth, in harmony with the S.D.A. doctrines as originally given through the Bible and the *Testimonies*; but that we respectfully protest against the actions of our brethren in disfellowshipping and excluding members from the churches which they have helped to build up, simply because they exercise their God-given rights in making a personal investigation of purported new light (6); and

Be it further *Resolved*, That being in harmony with the S.D.A. teachings as set forth in the Bible and the

Spirit of Prophecy, we are certain there can be no new movement other than the one designated as a "Great Reformatory Movement Among God's People" (7); and

Be it still further *Resolved*, That we disapprove of any personal denunciation of our brethren, but recognizing, as they, themselves, do, that the hour has struck for a "revival and reformation" (8), we shall, as God's true messengers, "cry aloud and spare not" (9).

Adopted in open session of The Davidian Seventh-day Adventists assembled on this twelfth day of March, 1934.

(Signed) ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The resolution which we have here adopted comes in response to an action by a representative body of Seventh-day Adventists assembled in Los Angeles, California, from six states extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, all of whom have made a careful and thorough investigation of the nature, work, and teachings of *The Shepherd's Rod*.

The "revival and reformation" mentioned in the foregoing resolution is none other than the "shaking" (10), "sealing" (11), "testing" (12), "purifying" time (13), caused by the proclamation of the "straight Testimony of the True Witness to the Laodiceans" (14), at which time the church is to emerge from her

"lukewarm" (15), condition by receiving the robe of Christ's righteousness, preparatory to giving the Loud Cry (16) of the third angel.

The fact that there can be no new organization clearly shows that all our work must be done in and for our S.D.A. church. We trust, therefore, that our desire to worship in the church of our choice, even though we have by her been deprived of our membership (and that for no other reason than for accepting "more light" on the Third Angel's Message) (17), will not be denied, and that our presence will not be forbidden.

(Italics Ours)

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:37-40.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. 7:12.