

Response to Egregious Attack of Layman for Religious Liberty Ministries on Shepherd's Rod Believers

This is a response to a recent [email newsletter entitled "Remember David Koresh"](#) dated April 18, 2010 that has been sent out to hundreds of Seventh-day Adventists (SDA's) via email by David Mould, president of Layman for Religious Liberty Ministries (LRLM). It contains numerous highly inflammatory and contradicting remarks about Davidian Seventh-day Adventists ([often confused with Branch Davidians](#)), most notably a deeply disturbing accusation that Davidians are soon planning to take part in "a mass slaughter of Seventh-day Adventist pastors - and that it would be carried out by members of this organization!" Before addressing Mr. Mould's newsletter, we would like to enumerate some important background information about what true Davidians believe and what *The Shepherd's Rod* message teaches.

Testimonies from Seventh-day Adventists

It is imperative to set forth plain facts about what Davidians who accept the writings of *The Shepherd's Rod* actually say from their own testimonies rather than hearsay and second hand reports. Notably, we have compiled several dozen written and published [testimonies of Seventh-day Adventists](#) who have chosen to personally investigate the writings of *The Shepherd's Rod* over the years for themselves and how it has changed their religious experience for the better and instilled in their hearts a greater love for God and their brethren in the Seventh-day Adventist church. This manifests itself with love, respect, and double honor to the anointed men of God (S. D. A. pastors, brethren of experience, etc.). We have also personally met and interacted with over 100 Davidians scattered all over the world over the past decade and on a large measure find them to be deeply concerned about the spiritual condition of the church and express their earnest desire to see a genuine revival and reformation take place in the church so that all may be reconciled to God prior to the great time of trouble that lies ahead. They earnestly believe that *The Shepherd's Rod* is the very message that God has sent to the S. D. A. church for this purpose in direct fulfillment of scripture (Micah 6:8, 9, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, p. 126). Not a single one of these individuals ever expressed or hinted a belief that they were in any way to be involved in the divine executive judgment or to slaughter even one member of the S. D. A. church as described in the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. In fact, most felt it was imperative for them to "sigh and cry" for all the abominations done in the midst. Furthermore, they tend to express a genuine concern for those who falsely charge them with wanting to harm the Seventh-day Adventist ministry or its lay members in the least

way. All felt that it was their God given duty to plea (Hosea 2:1) with their *beloved* brethren in Laodicea (SDA church) so that they would escape the soon coming judgment upon the house of God (1 Peter 4:17), not wanting that any should perish, most especially the church leaders and the ministers.

What Does the Shepherd's Rod Teach?

Next, it is critical to set the record straight as to what Davidians actually believe based on the [original writings of *The Shepherd's Rod* message](#). Foremost, Davidians are convicted that *The Shepherd's Rod* is a Holy Spirit inspired message of revival and reformation sent by God to save the Seventh-day Adventist church from its indecent worldly associations and offers, in turn, the only divine remedy for its Laodicean malady. Therefore, a brief synopsis of what *The Shepherd's Rod* message teaches about the divine judgment detailed in the ninth chapter of Ezekiel will be provided below with all the key references and documentation so that all the true and sincere in heart within the Seventh-day Adventist church can investigate for themselves without being subject a refuge of lies and fear mongering.

- *The Shepherd's Rod* message primary purpose is to bring a much needed revival and reformation to God's beloved Seventh-day Adventist church. As such, it represents God's earnest pleading voice of love to save sinners from their grievous and presumptuous sins so that we may all escape the soon coming destruction that will begin with the church and then extend out into the world (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, p. 124; *ibid*, Vol. 5, p.. 217; *Review and Herald*, February 25, 1902, par. 8; 1 Peter 4:17).
- *The Shepherd's Rod* teaches that the wheat and the tares in the church are to grow together until the harvest and that no man has a right to decide what or who constitutes a wheat or a tare in the church. This is a work left to God alone who is able to read the heart and pronounce judgment upon the individual character (*Testimonies for Ministers*, p. 46, 47; *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 70-75).
- *The Rod* plainly teaches that when God steps in to take the reins in His own hands (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 300) that no human agent will be involved, but only holy angels sent from heaven by God alone will do the work of separation in complete harmony with all of the writings of the Holy Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. (Matthew 13:39; Malachi 3:1-3; Ezekiel 9:2; Isaiah 66:15, 16; *Testimonies for Ministers*, p. 47, 373; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, pp. 190, 197.1; Vol. 5, p. 80; *Early Writings*, p. 118).

- The only role for the human instrument is to warn of the soon coming divine retribution coming from God by sighing and crying for all of the abominations in the church (Ezekiel 9:4; *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3*, p. 266-267), to “cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”--Isaiah 58:1.
- Any and all charges that Davidian Seventh-day Adventists somehow believe that they are to used to carry out the divine judgments of God upon the Seventh-day Adventist ministry are without foundation and constitute a scandalous form of liable against a minority group within the church fold simply on the basis of their religious convictions. A partial listing of the original published teachings of *The Shepherd's Rod* message is provided below that will clearly document what it teaches about how God is going to ultimately judge the unfaithful in the church ([Tract No. 1](#), “Dardanelles of the Bible”; [Tract No. 2](#), The Great Paradox of the Ages”; [Tract No. 3](#), “The Judgment and the Harvest; [Tract No. 8](#), “Mt. Zion at the 11th Hour; [Tract No. 9](#), “Behold I Make all Things New; [The Shepherd's Rod, Vol. 1](#); [The Shepherd's Rod, Vol. 2](#)).
- *The Shepherd's Rod* teaching on the immanent purification of the Seventh-day Adventist church as described in the ninth chapter of Ezekiel comes directly from the Holy Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. (Revelation 3:16; 7:1-8; Malachi 3:1-3; Isaiah 66:15, 16; *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3*, p. 266-267, Vol. 5, p. 211, *Manuscript Releases, Vol. 1*, p. 260, *1888 Materials*, p. 1303, *Selected Messages, Vol. 2*, p. 380.2).

False Charges Levelled Against Davidian Seventh-day Adventists by David Mould's Newsletter

- Davidians are soon planning to take part in “a mass slaughter of Seventh-day Adventist pastors”
- That Davidians, or members of the Shepherd's Rod organization, will actually carry out violent attacks with their own hands.
- That Davidian Seventh-day Adventists will make the name “Seventh-day Adventist” stink.
- That Davidians are fanatics who some day soon unleash terror in the SDA churches that will make the 1993 Waco massacre “look like a picnic”.
- That Davidians will resurrect the “cult stigma” that has tarnished the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

- That Davidians are ‘the kind of lunatics bred by the Seventh-day Adventist Church’.
- That Davidians will tarnish the name of Ellen White herself by misquoting her writings.
- That Davidians are harboring murderous thoughts in their breasts while attending in fellowship in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Mr. Mould offers no factual evidence for his malicious charges but rather bases them solely on hearsay from undocumented personal conversations held over 20 years in the past with just one man who claimed to be a “Gileadite”. His deceptive tactics bar no limit as he quotes from the writings of Ellen White to substantiate his claims.

“So should the followers of Christ, as they approach the time of trouble, make every exertion to place themselves in a proper light before the people, to disarm prejudice, and to avert the danger which threatens liberty of conscience.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 616

He then adds the following incendiary remarks . . .

“Did you catch that? As we see the storm clouds gathering, we’re expected to do everything in our power to put God’s Church in a proper light before the people. Satan, on the other hand, intends making the name “Seventh-day Adventist” stink. One of the agencies he’s going to use (I’m convinced of this) is the Shepherd Rod organization. Should the day come when these fanatics unleash their terror in the churches, it will then be oh so easy for Satan to: (i) resurrect the cult stigma that had tarnished the Seventh-day Adventist Church for more than a century and (ii) paste it anew all over us. “These are the kind of lunatics bred by the Seventh-day Adventist Church,”

To add credibility to his unscrupulous methods he then discusses some recent conversations and shoulder rubbings he had with religious liberty leaders from the Seventh-day Adventist Church (e.g., Lincoln Steed, Editor of Liberty Magazine and Elder Barry Bussey, Director for Legislative Affairs, Seventh-day Adventist Church). Once again unconfirmed reports and emails are mentioned to make it appear that Davidians are erroneously using statements from the writings of Ellen White to prove the imminent slaughter of Seventh-day Adventist pastors will be done by human agents. No documentation or references are cited.

Finally, Mr. Mould goes so far as to recommend that the World church send communiques to every Division, Union, and Conference and Seventh-day Adventist church worldwide telling the people what Davidians supposedly believe about the fulfillment of Ezekiel chapter nine. Finally, he suggests that “the Davidians, wherever they can be identified,

ought to be expelled from God's church forthwith." He then reasons. "How can we possible retain members whom we know to be Davidians. while such murderous thoughts are harbored in their breasts?"

An Appeal for True Religious Liberty and Christian Love One to Another

We feel compelled, out of necessity, to urgently cry out against this unwarranted and undocumented character assassination of Davidian Seventh-day Adventists and their beliefs by David Mould and Laymen for Religious Liberty Ministry as a harbinger of religious intolerance, persecution, and possible violence. If gone unchecked we fear that the Seventh-day Adventist church will be subject to undue embarrassment and harsh condemnation from the world if they are seen to be persecutors of those within their own fold because of the long standing tradition the church has developed to establish itself as champions of the liberty of conscience. What a mysterious inconsistency indeed would be witnessed by those outside the fold if they see from Seventh-day Adventists the same spirit of popery exhibited towards fellow Adventists when out of the other side of our mouth we are warning the world of what is about to come upon all those who do not submit to religious decrees that will be enforced by the state? How exactly does Bro. Mould suggest that all identifiable Davidians be expelled from the Seventh-day Adventist church anyway? By resorting to the arm of the law to force them out if they choose to follow the Holy Bible in not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as we see the great day of the Lord approaching (Heb. 10:25)? Is not God's house called a house of prayer for *all* people (Isa. 56:7)? Oh for the jewel of consistency that cries out.

Perhaps, Bro. Mould should take heed to the following inspired statements coming from the pen of Ellen White before passing judgment on *The Shepherd's Rod* message and those who freely choose by the liberty of conscience to follow the reforms that it uplifts.

"Charity "doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." The heart in which love rules will not be filled with passion or revenge, by injuries which pride and self-love would deem unbearable. Love is unsuspecting, ever placing the most favorable construction upon the motives and acts of others. Love will never needlessly expose the faults of others. It does not listen eagerly to unfavorable reports, but rather seeks to bring to mind some good qualities of the one defamed."--
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 168.4

“I have been especially instructed in regard to the danger of drawing apart, and of evil speaking and contention. We need to bow before God in repentance because of our lack of love for one another, and for him who died for us. The gold of love and faith is not abundant among us. Many are holding on to the truth with but the tips of their fingers. The precious time that should be spent in speaking of the Saviour's power to save, is being spent by many in carrying evil reports. Unless they make a decided change, they will be found wanting. Unless they have an entire transformation of character, they will never enter heaven. A deep, thorough work needs to be done in the hearts of those who profess to be children of God. Until they reveal the faith that works by love and purifies the soul, very little genuine work for God will be done in the world.”--**Review and Herald, November 24, 1904 par. 7**

“Oh, that the Lord might guide you! You should never in a single instance allow hearsay to move you to action, and yet you have sometimes done this.”--**Testimonies to Ministers, p. 299**

As loyal Seventh-day Adventists we are deeply concerned about the consequences of Bro. Mould's accusations and recommendation for expulsion of all known Davidians from the Seventh-day Adventist church and find at their core the very spirit of hatred and intolerance that has inspired the Inquisition and the murder of millions of faithful Christians throughout the centuries since Christ's first advent. It is deeply troubling and altogether inconsistent for such vitriolic sentiments to be issued from a ministry that is supposed to be champions for religious liberty and the defense of those who are persecuted for their religious beliefs.

Yours sincerely for the liberty of conscience for *all* Seventh-day Adventists to be honored, respected, and defended lest we become a reproach to our name and heritage in a cruel and unforgiving world.

In Christian love one to another,

The Publishers,

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