

Investigation of "The Shepherd's Rod" **by Pacific Union Conference**

As there are many inquiries coming in concerning this investigation, we are herein submitting the matter exactly as it came about and as it now stands. The following appeal was urged by the parties undersigned that the Pacific Union Conference should enter into an agreement to investigate the message contained in "The Shepherd's Rod."

Los Angeles, Calif.,
Jan. 18, 1934.

To the Members of the Pacific Union Conf.
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 Testimony Vol. 5, page 293; Test, on S.S. 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 above appeal was presented, the following letter was received:

Fullerton, Calif.,
Jan. 23, 1934.

Victor T. Houteff, 1
0466 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 weeks for the hearing.

He did not know the personnel of the I committee, or at least did not report to me I 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 getting 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.

After a delay of four weeks from the time Elder Rich's letter was received, Elder Prout, accompanied by Elder Rich, called in person stating that the proposed meeting was to be held the following Monday, which time as set by the Pacific Union Conference Committee was in direct conflict with our prearranged plans of other matters, and therefore, they were asked to change the date. This protest on our part was not made to evade these studies, nor with any desire to revoke the Fullerton appeal, as was reported, but rested wholly on the grounds of inconvenience as to the time selected by the Pacific Union Conference.

This request for a different date was ignored, and a few hours later, without granting consideration for another appointment, the herewith letter from Elder Calkins, the Pacific Union Conference President, was privately delivered (not through the mails). In the meantime, the request for a different date, and which was made verbally to Elders Prout and Rich was set forth in a letter and posted to Elder Calkins to which he made no reply.

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 10:00 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.

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 Eld. Prout's list of the proposed committee shows that nearly every one is bitterly opposed to it.

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 unadvisable for you to trust, and foolish for me to accept. For inasmuch as neither the General or 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 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 by far more important than earthly gain?

Let me suggest, Elder Calkins, that you select men that are dependable. Men that do not condemn a brother without a hearing. Men that can stand true to principle though heavens fall, and of those who truthfully believe the Third Angel's Message according to the Spirit of Prophecy, not flesh eaters. 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 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 Eld. 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.

Thus the uncompromising position assumed by the Pacific Union Conference was thereby forced through, obliging us to carry out their terms for the time of these studies.

The Fullerton appeal was in no sense designed as a contract on our part, but merely as a proposal. But the Pacific Union Conference, contrary to our desire, took this appeal and converted it into a final agreement of investigation, which they violated when they asked for several weeks to reply to our first study.

It will be noticed that the several subjects to have been considered were—"The Harvest" (which subject is presented herein), "Ezekiel Nine," "The Leopard Beast of Revelation 13," "Hosea, chapters One and Two," and "Matthew 20." The time was not to exceed one week. After the first study they requested an adjournment, and there was no arrangement made for further studies as

the agreement called for on the remaining subjects.

About four weeks after the said study was given, they set a date to render their reply which they had prepared in writing. There were twelve of the Shepherd's Rod adherents at this meeting and no objection was made to their being present. The findings were then read, which plainly showed that the document was constructed with the determined end in view of refuting the message of the Shepherd's Rod, regardless of the means employed, and in the manner often undertaken by Sunday keepers against the Sabbath truth. This fact may be clearly recognized by all who will read the document. Immediately after the reading of their findings, the meeting was adjourned, notwithstanding our insistent plea for three minutes' time in which to make a statement. We think such proceedings are most unreasonable and unChristlike.

The action of the committee compels us to conclude that they well knew that their report against the Shepherd's Rod had not refuted a single point, for had they believed otherwise, they would have asked us to abide by our agreement and would have urged us to renounce teaching, and would then have thrown the meeting open for testimonies and confessions, but no; they refused to hear a word from any of us.

Moreover, our agreement was that we should first give them the study on "The Harvest," upon which study *alone* they were to report their findings. But they did not honor their promise, endeavoring instead to refute the volumes of the Shepherd's Rod by quoting statements from them, and leaving out the evidence upon which they are based, making them appear to be without

authority, and contradictory to the Spirit of Prophecy.

However, neither these unprincipled actions, nor their sophistic refutation will drown the truth, as they are hoping, but will serve only to ensnare the indolent and superficial,—every one who is depending upon others to decide for him the difference between truth and error.

Elder Daniells, being chairman of the committee, promised to place the document, which was read to the Shepherd's Rod adherents, in the hands of the writer. But they refused to honor their promise, and though in these two months of waiting for their report we have called up the Union Conference office a number of times, only to receive some excuse and a promise without results. At last we sent the following telegram to Elder Daniells, while they were assembled in the Spring Council at Washington, D. C, to which they made no reply.

TELEGRAM

Los Angeles, California,
April 28, 1934.

Eld. A. G. Daniells,
Takoma Park, Washington, D. C,
c/o 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 Conf. 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.

We know that it would be almost impossible for one to fully believe the action of the committee. Nevertheless, we briefly set

forth the essential facts exactly as they are. Says the Spirit of Prophecy: "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.

Therefore, such a time as this will reveal to all whether they are standing alone with God or depending on a Daniel, Noah, or Job. Those who let others think and study and decide for them will soon be sadly disappointed when they find themselves on the wrong side—then "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In a letter from Prof. Graf to Dr. W. S. Butterbaugh, he describes the above stated committee as "the committee of twelve," repeating it a number of times, as though they were a more dignified body of authority than the Sanhedrin. One of the twelve was Prof. Graf himself. And the phraseology of the document that was read to "The Shepherd's Rod" adherents, reveals the fact that this COMMITTEE OF TWELVE prepared the document through his ingenious methods of interpretation. And this committee are now giving him their full support under their signature, to present before our people theological views which are supposed to be the mind of the twelve. Says Prof. Graf in his letter:

"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."

In the above, Prof. Graf emphatically states that the dependability of types, symbols and parables, is "positively dangerous" as a "basis" upon which to erect "essential Biblical doctrine." But if his assertion is correct, then the S. D. A. doctrines must be very dangerous, for the reason that they are largely based upon the interpretation of symbols.

The writer, as most Adventists, was converted to the S. D. A. church by their essential doctrines which are interpreted by types and symbols, such as the symbolical prophecy of the great image of Daniel Two. Thus he must confess that symbols are very essential for teaching doctrines; and that the great image of Daniel Two is a safe interpretation of the world's history.

Moreover, it is the only prophecy by which one can quickly interpret, with perfect safety, showing that this present world is to come to its end at the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, for the stone which was "cut out without hands" smote the image and after being ground to powder it was scattered to the four winds.

The symbolical beasts of Daniel Seven are the pillars of the S. D. A. doctrines. The truth of the "little horn" having the "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" is what made us reject the Catholic church and unite with the S. D. A. We may ask Prof. Graf to explain wherein the danger of these symbols exists, seeing that the S. D. A. essential doctrines are based upon symbolical interpretation!

If the interpretation of types and symbols are not dependable, as claimed by Prof. Graf, who represents the organization, then the denomination must have lately changed their position, for they have constantly, and with great certainty, been teaching these

symbols, also the types such as the Exodus movement being a *type* of the 1844 movement, etc. See ["Certainties of the Advent Movement"](#) and the ["40 Years in the Wilderness."](#)

As the committee of twelve have accepted the views of Prof. Graf, it is obvious that they have, by their action, changed their previous position. But what forced them to fall into this most disastrous predicament? The answer is, Because they were unable to refute the subject of "The Harvest." Therefore, in order to avoid the truth, they have in a wholesale manner erased from the Bible the importance and the dependability of the symbols, types, and parables, as the papacy sought to chisel out the fourth commandment from the decalogue.

What Prof. Graf has said of the types, symbols, and parables, infers that the early teachings of the S. D. A. denomination are not reliable. And though he causes many to think that he is wholly in harmony with the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, the following proves that his teaching is not only in conflict with them, but also with all that Christ taught. 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 has 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."—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."—"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.

Prof. Graf is evidently blind to the fact that the symbolical ceremonial system is the basis upon which the Old Testament teachings are founded, and that the New is likewise established upon the parables. Moreover, the prophecies of Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Zechariah, the Revelation, etc., are symbolical as well as typical, and being written for the express purpose of explaining the closing work of the gospel, it proves that the symbols and the parables are of vital importance and absolutely safe as the basis of essential doctrines, for they are the ground-work of the Scriptures.

As all of these symbols, types, and parables are not explained in the writings of Sister

White, and as he accepts no other authority for their interpretation, it is evident that he will never arrive at the truth, for his action renders void any possibility of them ever being revealed, and therefore, makes the prophets' writings of the symbols, types, and parables "vain repetitions."

(All italics ours)

For lack of space the numerical explanation of the illustrations on pages 1 and 44 has been omitted.

Volumes One and Two of "The Shepherd's Rod," which contain the message, are now available at a very low price. Vol. 1, 255 pages, paper cover, 75c per copy, postpaid. Vol. 2, 304 pages, keratol binding, priced at \$2.00, now for a limited time at \$1.00 per copy, postage extra. Nearly every subject in this volume is illustrated on very comprehensible figurative charts. The special price on the two volumes is \$1.75, postpaid. Tract No. 1 (Ezekiel's chapter One), with illustration of the cherubim, 48 pages, 5c. Tract No. 2, of Zech. 6:1-8, with a beautiful comprehensible illustration in colors, 64 pages, 8c. The 11 charts contained in Vol. 2 of "The Shepherd's Rod," the 1 in



Tract No. 2, and the 2 harvest charts in this Tract, 14 in all, photographic copies, may be obtained in size about 20 x 30 inches, for \$6.50.

These publications and "The Warning Paradox" (Zech. 6:1-8) are available at the present time.

All five for \$1.98, postpaid.

IMPORTANTISSIMO!

As further evidence that Prof. Graf is the official Bible and Testimonies interpreter for the denomination, attention is called to the front page article in the "Pacific Union Recorder" of April 18, 1934, which is a quotation from one of Brother Graf's brochures.

Our object in referring to this "Recorder" article is to correct several errors which were made in interpreting the following :

"'The Shepherd's Rod' says, 'The idea concerning the symbolical application of the false prophet of Rev. 19:20, the woman on the scarlet colored beast of Rev. 17, *the leopard-like beast of Rev. 13*, the scarlet colored beast of Rev. 17, and the non-descript beast of Daniel 7, as being symbols of the papacy, is unbiblical and also illogical,'—'Shepherd's Rod,' Vol. II, p. 148." "The Shepherd's Rod" explains that *all* of these could not refer to the papacy, though *some* may. Furthermore, we have explicitly stated that the leopard-like beast of Rev. 13 *does* represent the papacy by the head which was "wounded." But this explanation has been omitted in this article, which leaves the impression that the "Shepherd's Rod" is in direct contradiction to the Spirit of Prophecy. See "The Shepherd's Rod," Vol. 2, p. 96. The second quotation from "The Shepherd's Rod" appearing in said article is: " 'The idea that the papacy is called the

beast is altogether wrong.'—'The Shepherd's Rod,' Vol. 2, p. 151."

The beast as *a whole* cannot represent the papacy, says the "Rod," for there are six other heads beside the papal head, and also ten horns on the same beast. This explanation is made on the same page from which the article quotes. Another objection in said article is regarding the receiving of the "wound." The "Shepherd's Rod" makes clear that the "deadly wound" was delivered through the reformation, and completed by 1798, for the imprisonment of the pope cannot be the receiving of the wound, because the wound on the head was *healed*, but the pope *died*. It will be noted however, that, while attempting to refute the "Rod" the author of the brochure deals with the "Great Controversy" in the same manner that he does with the "Shepherd's Rod," for he omits the foregone explanation (pp. 142, 155, 190) concerning the reception of the "wound," and thereby bringing in confusion. Moreover, by referring to "The Great Controversy," p. 439, it will be noted that Rev. 13:10 was fulfilled in 1798, and not verse 3. The editor of the "Signs of the Times" also writes in the following quotation that the deadly wound was delivered by the reformation!

"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.

As the "Signs of the Times" in the above approves of the teaching of "The Shepherd's Rod," and disproves that of the "Recorder," it is obvious that the latter is promulgating biased interpretations, while the "Signs" is, by truth, supporting the teaching of the

"Shepherd's Rod." Consequently, confusion is brought about by two principles; first, through the opposition by the "Recorder," and second, by the ignorance on the part of the readers—failing to diligently compare one publication with another.

Moreover, why do they call this teaching in the "Shepherd's Rod" "heresy," but in the "Signs of the Times," "truth"? And why spend time and money in their attempt to kill this advocacy of the "Shepherd's! Rod" and pay the "Signs of the Times" to propagate the same thing!

Another serious error occurring in the article is where it says, "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." We state emphatically that, I at no time have we made any such statement, and hereby respectfully request the editor of the "Recorder" to correct this "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts," lest ye wail—"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Heb. 4:7; Jer. 8:20.

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For a revised and updated version of this report found within Tract No. 7 entitled "The Great Controversy Over The Shepherd's Rod", please download a PDF scan of the original at the following [link](#).

For questions or comments regarding this document or copies of the original Shepherd's Rod literature, please feel free to contact us anytime.

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