

# The Mustard Seed Advent, NewsLetter, 13: II

★ ★ February and March ★ ★

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## “THE SHEPHERD’S ROD CALLS”

**CAPTION:** *“Yesterday, I am sure that it could be successfully argued: Inspired-sheep-stealing under the directive of the ‘porter’ worked righteously in that darker epoch, but my mission was not to be nursed by the president of that theological ethos; instead, I was called to join the champions who would become her new mentor, her light, the one who would stand up in the proverbial pews to admonish the pastor. The admonition from the pews, the exposure of the false aura worn by the proverbial pastor in the pulpit, I now know, is to be a simple message, one expressed by this testimony: ‘The fold no longer needs a “porter” to guard the “Door”; it needs shepherds to open the Door, “disciples indeed” to teach her of Christ.’ She needs to marry the shepherd with the Rod...”*

## Monthly Dispatch



Dear Brethren,

It seems business as usual —does it not?— as time progresses. The inattentive cannot and do not observe the progress with which heaven is advancing the saints. Already, the Lord has preserved, Pittsburgh, the headquarters of His final work, with the weather protection promised to His “peaceable habitation” —see *Isa 32*. Two major weather patterns that were projected to pass though Pittsburgh in recent weeks this winter circumvented this land and emptied themselves of several feet of snow in the areas to the north, east, and south of our home. Truly, the Mighty Rock, in the weary land has given to us, as promised, a shelter in the time of storm. Many would allow such graces to go uncelebrated; hence, this movement must conduct its episodes of thanksgiving.

Likewise, we, being preoccupied with the affairs of our lives, have failed to discern that the *Times of the Gentiles*, the period appointed to them to control the church is waning, and the Lord’s judgments, already in the land, continues to intensify. The *mustard seed* calls all, as we proceed into this new year, to celebrate that we have been informed, in advance of the arrival of the Lord’s impending glory, of the spectacular events to soon be unleashed upon the earth. As it delivers this reminder, we should also be told that not all major events, requiring keen insight, are to be subtly unfolded to us —some are to explode upon the scene, and only the wise who have heeded the Lord’s counsel will be prepared for that hour of major upheaval.

We should additionally be advised that, with the end of the *Times of the Gentiles*, their ways, their embedded concepts of righteousness, their attitudes and lauded definitions of the highly esteemed character of a man or a culture —in sum, the ethos of their work and their stamp upon religion— will be changed. We, to discern “the way the truth and the life”, will begin to do things by adopting Christ’s demeanor, and this will bring to us the happiness for which we all now yearn.

As did the Lord when He walked amongst us by assembling the disciples just before He unleashed Christianity upon the world, likewise today He has assembled men and women to learn of Him and in turn, teach His ways. Many of them come from divergent backgrounds and have climbed from the proverbial holes of the earth to ascend to the pinnacle of this Adventist light. Why did they take such a journey?—because, even unbeknownst to them, Father has led them to Himself. Their test has not been their faithfulness to the lofty principles of sinlessness and Adventist elitism; instead, it has been a response to a simple question, “Can you climb the steady climb and follow the footsteps of Christ?”

Anyone, from any walk of life on earth, regardless of their past experiences, can join this work. Impressed by the advances which some have made, the MSC has decided to chronicle the path that others, those who have expressed a willingness to share their “Steps to Christ”, have taken so as to encourage us all along our journey. If you have a life story to tell, please feel encouraged to submit it to this desk for review and potential publication. Be prepared for the MSA to edit your story, and add to it—not the facts of your life but—its own spiritual analysis and meaning, its counsel and therapeutic assessment of your journey. Consider the example of the below testimony, the

### **DOSSIER OF BROTHER EMILIO**

My name is Emilio, and I have a testimony showing my steps to Christ which the *mustard seed* has found to be intriguing and accordingly proposed to publish it. Since I recognize the *mustard seed* as my spiritual counselor, I eagerly agreed, and the below story of my life’s progress in truth, the meaning of its aspect interpreted by him, I now share with the brethren. Its relationship to the closing work must be so done in order to encourage the many whom I am confident have traipsed through similar dramas in life. The path through life towards the Kingdom is always fraught with drama, but my experience shows God’s hand as it directs His sheep on a homeward-bound journey. God’s prompting began by

***A Little Red Book.*** ~~~~~: Today, 03-Mar-2013, I am approaching my 44<sup>th</sup> birthday. But I was raised as a Roman Catholic and baptized by that church in my infancy. I was not trained to become a student of religion or the Bible; I did not realize that a man must study to receive God’s approval. After all, we had the Pope; he interpreted the Bible for us; he was our priest to tell us of God and to forgive us of our sins. Not only was I oblivious to study, but I also never felt the need to question anything; so it never occurred to me that I had to open a Bible to discover the way to God’s Kingdom. In spite of these limitations, God amazingly still started His work in me very early in my life. From where, from whom, I cannot recall, but I was given a ***little red booklet*** in my early teens. Written therein were at least 20 scriptural verses which assisted me in my steps to Christ. The one that put me on my feet was the Text, “***Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.***” —2Tim 2: 15. A student of righteousness was to indeed become the actual path of my choice: I would one day learn of God’s will for me by my strenuous and determined efforts in study.

Such efforts began with the simple assignment that I gave to myself: I read that ***little red book***, my only Bible, and I did so again and again. Like seeds planted in my heart, the knowledge learned would one day grow to fruition and lead me to the Lord. From those readings, hope also grew within me. This hope I needed for, as a teenager in high school, my shame and reproach, the deeds of my hands and feet, clouded my confidence in God’s salvation. He was still a distant and faded light in my mind; yet I can say His influence was always felt.

After high school, I went to a university to study, and like the prodigal son, I lived riotously. In spite of this, the void in my life could not be filled by the parties, the night clubs, the intoxication, the sexual exploits, etc. I shudder to be more specific in this letter, but suffice it to say, my profane life left me with a haunted feeling of estrangement from God. I even entertained thoughts of suicide. Still, through perseverance, I graduated from the university and received my *Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing* as I continued my path to Christ.

In 1992, at the age of 22, I remember beginning a gradual, albeit tumultuous, ascension. It was then that my test for approval came, a secular test with spiritual ramifications. It answered the simple question, “How would I handle prized information?” “Would I hide it under a bushel, use it for my own

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exploitive benefit, or freely share it with everyone I knew?” Then, I was reminded of a Text from the **little red booklet**: which reads as follows: “*No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.*” —Luke 11: 33. The knowledge to which I refer came then when I met a brother named, Stefan. We would eventually journey together to Christ, but our introduction first enveloped around his keen interest, the intricacies of the business world, and we both became employed into the arena of financial services. In a nutshell, what we learned was that the majority of the people were, like helpless sheep, being fleeced and deceived with regards to money management and were being exploited by financial wolves, predators. Again, being a quick study, after learning the exploits of the financial industry, I became excited to tell all whom I could help; in a way, I became a shepherd, an evangelist seeking to share that secular gospel —well, at least the spirit was right. I was driven to open up that gem with anyone who would listen to me; this I did gratuitously and without compensation —a novel, if not aberrant, way to teach me the underpinning principles of Christian discipleship. However, the lack of zeal to profit in finance was my downfall in that occupational pursuit; the need to bring relief to people, to protect them from predatory scoundrels, seemed to be the countervailing orientation which drove me. Perhaps more importantly, Stefan, likewise born into Catholicism, and I were both introduced to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) faith. I became enticed, though not fully committed, to the doctrines of Adventism. A couple years later, we began to attend church. It seemed as if I stepped into a whole new world for beforehand, I had no concept of Adventism or even of Protestantism.

A failure in my career in finance, I pursued work in my degreed field of study, nursing. It seems that failures in my efforts tended to cause me to meander forward. This I say, for my embrace of Adventism and its lofty standards of righteousness also greatly challenged my perseverance and endurance. I could not thereby find complete victory from the path of sin and worldliness, but at least I then knew the standard; such was, at a minimum, one feather in their cap. But this knowledge made the guilt which I experienced even more burdensome as I descended to new depths of degradation: I expanded my dalliance with corruption and reproach by yielding to the temptation of cocaine. Thankfully, I did not use it enough to form a habit —perhaps that was the saving grace in the experience— for in my second use, it made me feel more desperate. I remember crying out to the Lord to give me a fuller meaning to life, one that brought the happiness that forever seemed to elude me. I guess that this expresses yet another feather in the Adventist cap: They gave me a fuller knowledge to call on God. As explained in greater detail below, my path to the fulfillment of that prayer followed my Adventist-heightened zeal for the Bible; I became what some might call

**A Student Teacher.** ~~~~~: Can a man cheat on the Lord, or does God employ other channels to corral us back to the fold? —a perplexing question to consider in my next step! As I proceeded in my search for God, I was introduced to Bible studies by a youth pastor at a Baptist church. I remember my first study there: They asked me to turn to *1 Corinthians* —I couldn’t find it. My embarrassment, indeed frustration, was quickly softened as I remembered one of the Texts from the **little red book**: “*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*” —2Tim 3: 15. I enjoyed the company of those whom I met in the Baptist faith, and I garnered a respect for their love of God. To share my new-found joy, I called Stefan one evening. You might have guessed it: By then, he was committed to the Adventist faith. Unlike him, I did not see the need, once having accepted Jesus, to fuss over denominations. I guess by venturing into the embrace of the Baptist faith, I did not cheat on the Lord; although my flirtation with that faith would yield for me much trauma as I advanced towards Christ. Instead of God allowing me to fully disengage myself from Adventism, He led me on a path of more intense Bible scholarship. This I say because, upon hearing of my excursion, Stefan, perhaps out of a spirit of righteous jealousy, invited me over with the lure of learning more about Bible truths. Impressed with his biblical insight, I agreed to come over that evening and we watched video presentations of an Adventist evangelist who explained from a biblical perspective a number of enticing doctrines such as the *State of the Dead*, the truth about hell, and the Sabbath...my life would never be

the same again. That night, we stayed up until 3:00 in the morning; there had to be at least 20 videos—I took some home—and I was captivated.

I secluded myself at home and watched the rest of the videos that looked at the *Sanctuary Doctrine*, the *Seven Trumpets*, the *Seven Last Plagues* and even the place of America and the Roman Catholic Church as revealed in the Bible. I became fearful that the devil was going to try to hurt or even kill me because I was given so much knowledge. But my other more-moving thought, no doubt engendered by my evangelical passions to expose the truth to the sheep was, “Why wasn't this knowledge being shared with the world?” People needed to know this, and, while yet still a student, I was determined to be the teacher of that light. I would venture out to share this revelation with everyone with whom I had contact.

Again, my studious energy enveloped me. I studied so much that week that I recall calling the Baptist pastor seeking to enlighten him about the doctrine pertaining to the *State of the Dead*. His response, though negative, was at least surprisingly informative: He seemed to be non-receptive to my contradictory doctrine. Thus he was without a cogent or substantive reply. Maybe, being devoid of experience in the religious world, I approached him with naive expectations, but his reaction was surprising, and I pensively registered it in my mind. It enlightened me to the theretofore, non-perceived reality of political bigotry that exists in religion. Like in the financial markets, there was also in the religious world both sheep and wolves. It was then that I learned how God has set me apart for few men are willing to weigh evidence which contradicts their embedded theories. They seem to jealously entrench themselves within the confines of their own beliefs. Adventists are humans too; hence, graced with this truth of the false face of religious piety borne by men, I was then better prepared and equipped to fellowship within the Adventist community and do so with realistic expectations. I determined to find a church where I could learn more. That week I finished the rest of the videos and threw away my pictures and statues of mother Mary and Jesus, emptied my fridge of any pork and seafood, and attended my first Sabbath service. Lest some may think that throwing away statues of Jesus or Mary would be easy, they too must be cautioned against naivety. From my perspective, it was a monumental step since, being born and raised a Catholic, those were deeply-embedded icons of my spiritual station; they were immovable fixtures, and such acts of their disposal gave to me a feeling of sacrilegious heresy and self-desecration which yielded a feeling of disconnection from God. As my story will reveal, my victory over such emotional attachments, can be used as a harbinger of the Christian path to victory.

I still remember my first Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Sabbath service. It was all new to me—a *church* service that starts around 9:00 AM and ends at sun down. But a number of things really struck me that day. God would again start planting seeds. One of the elders told me about the *Shepherd's Rod* (explained below) and warned me to shun them. My newfound insight into the false face of human piety had an opportunity to chime again in my mind—praise God for His genius leadership! The people that were leading off in the Sabbath studies were not well versed in Bible prophecy—this coming from a person who just studied merely 20-plus videos that week. But, a vision, later shown to be significant, would keep flashing before me: one in which I would be standing up in the pews during a sermon to admonish the pastor. But really!—me, a mere student of the Bible, teaching an appointed leader of the flock and exposing the phony aspects of his profession—such a notion struck me then to be merely a fanciful delusion. But then, there was that episode with the Baptist pastor that seemed to affirm the demeanor of my envisioned calling. Regardless of my failure to integrate that vision into my understanding, it persisted. Today I am more educated there-to-pertaining from the Lord's shepherd. But then being devoid of that ‘wonderful counsel’, I passed through a disconcerting phase as

***A Surreptitious Shepherd.*** ~~~~~: Believe it or not, while traversing from Catholicism, then to the world, next to the Baptist faith, then to the SDA faith, my good friend Stefan and I made yet another advance in our path to God. In February, 1995, just months from my conversion/baptism to Adventism, I boldly ignored the caution from the SDA elder and ventured forward and upward into the lofty strata of the *Shepherd's Rod Movement*, AKA, the *Rod*. Stefan provided me with *Rod* literature to investigate. Stefan was indeed a well-placed friend in my life, an angel from the Lord. In retrospect, his friendship seemed to be a great gain from my Adventist

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experience. My feet then were really moving. With just a few pieces of literature, AKA, tracts, from him, I was prepared to learn more of God's love and His salvation. Stefan told me how he went about fighting against the *Shepherd's Rod*, but after doing his due diligence; he had come to believe in its revelations. I needed to find out for myself what it was all about; so, I requested my own literature from the publishing house, Bashan, in July of that year.

Again, the *Shepherd's Rod Message* is referred to as the *Rod*. Its members are called Davidians. To understand its work, you must know that the SDA Church began its ministry in 1844 by the inspired and prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White. The church was revisited with more prophetic light nearly 90 years afterwards. In 1930, that new light came by the *Spirit of Prophecy*, as promised in the Bible, and it is what we call the *Shepherd's Rod*. The Holy Spirit rested on a man, a traditional and faithful member of the Adventist body of believers, whose name was Victor T. Houteff (VTH). After nearly 25 years of work, causing a great stir, he passed in 1955 leaving a large flock to reassemble under new leadership. Shortly afterwards, competition for leadership allowed MJ Bingham to emerge and to forward the torch. As an overall summary, the *Rod's* mission, against all opposition and by all means, was to teach the laity of the SDA church about its newer light. Hence, upon its arrival in the days after 1930, it caused an upheaval amongst that body of believers, especially the leadership. Sixty-five years later, in 1995, that struggle still raged in the midst of which the Lord had placed both me and Stefan. Volumes of new-light doctrines—most being extremely divergent from traditional Adventism—were contained in the *Rod's* evangelical literature and Bible studies, doctrines which my beforehand, Bible-voided mind quickly absorbed. As I reflect backwards, I can now see the wisdom of why the Lord began my journey, in my youth, with a mind relatively empty of Bible doctrine for it left a voracious hunger which I joyously sought to satiate. The more I studied the *Rod* doctrines, the more my eyes became opened.

Yet, human nature, the “carnal mind”, is still human nature, and, as I battled with my own, as I continued in my struggles to ‘walk after the spirit and not after the flesh’, I also contended with the same even while I was in the highest echelons of Bible religion. Evidently, my conversion was incomplete, and though my studious efforts helped me to understand righteousness, more power from on high was still needed to cause me to live in it. Before delving into that disparaging aspect along my path to Christ, I need to describe my efforts to officially validate myself within the lofty circles of the *Shepherd's Rod Movement*. This validation was the next step of my reformed path, and to me, it was a great achievement. First, Stefan introduced me to Bashan Davidians, the saints who forwarded VTH's work, in our home town, Edmonton, Canada. I joined them and became a connected, *Rod* believer. What is a Bashan Davidian? They represent a large subset of Davidians who have organized into a fellowship that is committed to teaching the *Rod* to Adventists in an attempt to reform them. Many would accurately summarize the point of their calling and evangelism as an effort in “sheep stealing”. They, against the determined efforts of the Adventist Church leaders, sought to clandestinely enlighten the laity in the doctrines of the *Rod*. Consequently, Bashan Davidians were, to the elders of the SDA Church, their arch nemesis. Bashan is headquartered in the woods of southwest Missouri but they have satellite groups throughout North America and, as stated, one in my city, Edmonton, Canada. My progress within their ranks led me to make the first of two personal visits to their headquarters. This was a major step: Not completely unlike the well-known, *Pilgrimage to Mecca* for members of the Islamic faith, I too took a similar geographic journey; I courageously ventured 2000 miles south-east to their headquarters. There in June of 1996, I met the leader who was a female, Sister Jemmy Bingham. Resultantly, I proudly received the full affirmation of my new faith, a member-in-good-standing acknowledgment called a “Certificate of Fellowship”. This seemed then to be the proverbial pinnacle of the temple mount.

My goal, in the parlance of the *Mission-Impossible* theme, was to accept my assignment. It was the same given to all Davidian adherents: to aggressively convert their less-biblically-educated Adventist brethren. This was a subtle, yet a major, change in direction for me; I became—not merely a sojourner to Christ and a student premier but also—an activist, a secret agent, one who clandestinely

garnered sheep from “someone else’s” flock. Does this not remind you of Jacob’s struggle with his uncle, Laban? Nevertheless, the question loomed large: Was I prepared for this new orientation? —my continuing saga will tell. For now, suffice it to say that, true to my gusto and passion, I naively, yet zealously, acted upon my divine, marching orders. I began to enlighten Adventists in the *Rod* message by surreptitiously giving studies in their SDA Church circles or services while representing myself as a member who was fully committed to the entrenched doctrines of Adventism, as so deemed by their appointed leaders. At first, they embraced my efforts because they did not discern my motives or my carefully-concealed Davidian orientation. All Adventist churches were within my sights, but I especially targeted my ministry to the Korean, SDA community. Being of Asiatic heritage, I am a Filipino, it seemed to be the logical tactic. This I did until the Adventist leadership discovered my motives and put an abrupt and decisive stop to my effort. They sent to me a threatening letter for which I was not spiritually prepared to receive. It jolted me; I was not prepared to continue my work within the confines of the menacingly-empowered, legal arena. The letter stated that I was no longer invited to attend their services and warned me that, if I stepped onto church property, they would issue a court order to keep me away. Like a mountain climber who ascends too quickly only to suffer a nose bleed, I think, in retrospect, this was my nose-bludgeoning experience on my path to Christ: I was not prepared for such a failure. Without unraveling the full degree of my besetment, suffice it to say, I became emotionally drained and defeated. I remember that confounding and depressing feeling of loneliness; it was akin to the downer experienced in my youth, before I found religion, when parties, sex, and intoxication made me also feel empty and lost. Standing alone for Christ requires training and experience that I had yet to achieve; indeed, this was to be my “school of hard knocks”. I stepped into an arena of gladiators and was ill-prepared to absorb their counter punch. I had, as it turned out, no comfort: neither from family nor friends; after all, I had left or escaped their coop of containment. This precluded me from turning to them for comfort and it led to

**The Battle Between the Two Madonnas.** ~~~~~: Yet, the saga continued: Even my ties to the small group in Edmonton and with Bashan slipped away from me. It all seemed to start very innocently. Beginning in 1997, when I started a relationship with a Baptist lady who was almost 10 years older than me, I saw a new side to isolation and rejection. Being that I was rooted in a Catholic heritage, counsel has now caused me to think of her, symbolically, as my self-appointed maternal woman of comfort, “my personal Madonna”, a nurturing female to coddle me in my turmoil. The name, Madonna, is an Italian name for the mother of Jesus. To the Catholic and orthodox Christians, she has become an alternate link to Jesus, one who can tenderly petition Him on our behalf. This may more fully explain my initial feelings of sacrilegious heresy when I discarded her statute from my home. Much popular art of antiquity depicts Jesus in her arms symbolizing her relevance to humanity’s salvation. If metaphors can represent real life, I found myself emotionally attached to this older, Baptist woman; I now see from counsel that she became a source to whom I clung for spiritual comfort and relief. She, as made evident from my tepid embrace of her, was not just a girlfriend. My attachment to her was due to my haunting failure in my Davidian, spiritual mission, and again, per my counsel, I needed, deep within my soul, cuddling from her comforting arms. Put in a nutshell, she had a psychological appeal which I only now can discern, and this appeal caused me to cling to her as a baby to his mother’s breast. Her being Baptist makes sense too: Remember, when I first converted to Adventism, Mother Mary was discarded by my hand. I was now an Adventist, a Protestant Christian. Yet, I found myself in need of the very consolation which Catholics presumptuously teach that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is commissioned to give. Being one who had advanced beyond Catholicism into the pinnacle of Christianity, Adventism, and then cast away, I needed a new maternal path to redemption. Evidently, though I had ridded myself of all my Catholic art, I had not really discarded from my heart the ethos and the spiritual aura of that discipline. I still reverted to my roots for my spiritual crutches as I attempted to limp to the throne of Jesus. I could not look to the Adventists; they disfellowshipped me. In view of my advanced education in religion, upon whom then could I lean? The Baptist faith was my only Protestant relief. In spite of this, our relationship was very rocky, perhaps due to the age difference. But what else could be expected from a relationship where the

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emotional, subterranean issues of motherhood become competitively entangled with the intimate needs of a lover?

These things are still very surreal to me, but what is positive and definitively concrete is that, for all the emotional relief which she brought to me, she also created for me much turmoil. It began when Stefan, my mentor, and another brother, himself recently affiliated with the *Rod*, expressed their disapproval of my relationship with her: She was a “non-believer”, they contentiously insisted. Perhaps they did not understand the fragility and tenderness of my newly-forged connection to the Lord; maybe they did not discern the lack of strength which accompanies all who are newly born into the faith. I became a conscious student in the supreme, but I was not ready to immediately be postured as a front-line soldier against Goliath. Or perhaps the fault was mine: Maybe I needed to grow up in the Lord. Regardless of the blame, I continued, as you shall see, to grow. Beforehand, though, the brethren demanded that I choose between them or “my Madonna” —my enlightened words today, not theirs. Their ultimatum was not very compelling: I chose to stay within the confines of my emotionally contorted relationship; I did so and was very unhappy. Bashan headquarters, needless to say, also revoked my prized *Certificate of Fellowship*.

Whereas once I threw my religious icons away; now it seemed as if they had discarded me —but not without a fight. I wanted to personally plead my cause with Sister Jemmy Bingham, the wife of the deceased, former leader, MJ Bingham, and the installed leader of Bashan. If I could win her approval, this would force the Edmonton group to accept me and to reverse their judgment of my re-emerged flirtation with the Baptist faith. In retrospect, I had to have known that headquarters would affirm the resolution of Edmonton, but ever the irrational fighter, I took an injudicious attempt at it. Accordingly, I made my next, ill-advised move. Ever the inept, yet stouthearted fighter, absorbing one blow to the face after the next —emotionally bleeding profusely all the while— I went to Bashan for a sit down with their august leader. Strangely, if there ever was a bona-fide symbol of the Catholic Madonna, it was her, Sister Jemmy Bingham. She, by profession, held the keys to the Kingdom. If she took away your fellowship, you were considered burnt toast; that is, unless and until you did those things defined by her to redeem yourself. Redemption by her terms —her arms so to speak— was/is the only swaddling blanket of mercy and compassion that she offers, the only path to one’s salvation. And though neither she, nor any of her adherents, would ever vocalize such a claim in this phraseology, all of her adherents knew that their connection to heaven came by her judgment and leadership. The official doctrine from her desk is that God placed her “in charge” of His plan of redemption, of His work, that she was the heavenly appointed “porter” of *John 10*, the one appointed to guard the sheepfold and to determine the rite/right to therein gain admission. Truly, for her adherents, though they were the proverbial pinnacle of the temple in Christianity, Jesus’ mercy and salvation came —not by studying the Bible, not even by embracing the *Rod*, nor by adhering to His testimony, but— by one’s obeisance to her will. If given the chance today, I am sure that she would respond, **“God’s chariot is headquartered here at Bashan. All Bible and *Spirit-of-Prophecy* references must meet with my approval before they can be embraced as tenants of faith. Anyone who garners for themselves light and truth, ‘headbowlers’, need to, for their salvation, present all doctrines for my approval.”** Such a well-known retort echoes through the minds of all who have suffered under her yoke —adding credence, if not urgency to the release of this testimony. It is this staunch and authoritative mandate that makes her the perfect symbolism for the Catholic Madonna, the one who holds Jesus, as a helpless baby, in her arms. With such misappropriated abuse of power, she emasculated her Bashanian disciples. In sum, I was in a struggle between two Madonnas.

Upon arrival at Bashan to receive her authorization of my relationship, perhaps sensing the surety of another failure, depression clouded my mind; I lost my courage and wanted to turn and flee. My challenges to their doctrinally-denunciatory position which decried inter-faith marriages and my appeals for consideration all fell upon deaf ears. I would, years later, come to learn that Sister Bingham suffered from a typical Davidian, spiritual illness: She had the *Rod* devoid of the Shepherd. But at the time, I could only see her authority and suffer the devastating pain of her rejection of my appeal. I did not

accept her ultimatum —either my way or the highway— instead, I made a decision that has baffled me since that day until today. I went there to fight with my Davidian Madonna so as to secure into the fold my Baptist Madonna; yet, strangely enough, I then chose to detach myself from both of them. How, where, why, when did I become so strong that I could immediately and unequivocally detach myself from my female lovers? Retaining the one by my side was the reason why I rejected Stefan’s verdict; it was the reason why I took that long journey to Bashan; I obviously thought strongly that I needed her; after all, she was the point of the entire fight. Without a doubt, it is safe to make concrete the conclusion that my former emotional attachment to her was not based on true love but on my emotional disorientation stemming from my failed efforts to steal sheep for Bashan; else, I would not have so easily dismissed her. But the issue of my break with Bashan is equally intriguing. How could I break away from “the most powerful light of doctrine on the earth”; was it not the pinnacle of my spiritual temple? As a prelude to the answer, I can tell you now with absolute certainty: Every successful saint, to be an authentic shepherd for Christ, AKA, His disciple, needs this day of awakening, this jolting epiphany; it is essential in our steps to Christ. It is the Lord’s path of salvation for them, and I am reminded of His exact affirmation of this claim as I learned it from my *little red book*: “*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” —John 8: 31, 32. Although my climb into the embrace of Davidia was an elevation in my life, I was not called of the Lord to be her child, a baby in her arms; my connection was not to be to Mary but to Christ, and this as one of His disciples. Yesterday, I am sure that it could be successfully argued: Inspired-sheep-stealing under the directive of the “porter” worked righteously in that darker epoch, but my mission was not to be nursed by the president of that theological ethos; instead, I was called to join the champions who would become her new mentor, her light, the one who would stand up in the proverbial pews to admonish the pastor. The admonition from the pews, the exposure of the false aura worn by the proverbial pastor in the pulpit, I now know, is to be a simple message, one expressed by this testimony: “The fold no longer needs a ‘porter’ to guard the ‘Door’; it needs shepherds to open the Door, ‘disciples indeed’ to teach her of Christ.” She needs to marry the shepherd with the *Rod*.

As I stated already, like seeds planted in my heart, my *little red book*, replete with only Bible references, would one day lead me to the Lord. It prepared me for victory in this hour of embattlement. Light received from the shepherd’s counsel pertaining to *John 10* —a Text which was first burned into my mind from the *little red book*— became twisted in my Bashanian theology and can only now give to me my understanding. It is this understanding from which all others who have been beaten down by Bashan’s rod can likewise benefit:

*“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out...Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep”* —John 10: 1-3, 7.

Christ claims to be the Door; the one to Whom the porter opens. This is the answer to the puzzle, given to me only now, in 03/2013. By it, Bashan’s obfuscation is now reversed allowing others who suffer under the suffocating blanket in Sister Bingham’s arms to be enlightened. There are three personalities to be theologically accounted for in the study of the sheepfold, personalities which Bashan has clouded: Not counting the sheep, the thieves, the cattle, et-al, there is ~~~~~**FIRST**: *the shepherd*, ~~~~~**SECOND**: *the Door*, ~~~~~**THIRD**: *the temporary position, the porter*. The shepherd, by Christ’s appointment, is ordained to call the sheep. Though commissioned by the Second; he, the shepherd, is not the same as the second personality, **the Door**. Neither is he the third personality, **the porter** for the porter, a temporary fixture, opens the Door for his, the shepherd’s, entry and to accommodate his assignment to begin ‘name calling’. Without being too doctrinally elaborate in this letter, Christ cannot be the porter for He claims to be the Door, and remember the porter opens the door. He cannot be the porter for another reason: After leaving His disciples and the church to journey to heaven, according to *Mark 13*, He commanded the porter, a man left behind, to watch. “*For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house...and commanded the porter to watch.*” —Mark 13: 34. This point cements to the heart of the wise the fact which Bashan has failed



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to integrate into their accounting: That is, the porter is a temporary fixture, one who is only needed in the absence of the shepherd. This conclusion is made obvious because we know that before His, Christ's departure, He, Christ Himself did the watching making such an occupation only necessary upon His departure. Did He not indeed show His own skill at calling the sheep, an assignment of the shepherd, when He said to His enemies, **"...ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep...My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"** —John 10: 26, 27? Here, He expresses a keenness to define those who are His sheep. Yet, insurmountable evidence manifests that He promised to revisit His disciples in the last day—not personally or visibly at first, but—through a man of His own appointment. This man would necessarily then be the shepherd, again rendering as unnecessary the job of a watching porter. He said, **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."** —John 13: 20. He also said, **"...everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."** —John 6: 40. Accordingly, the title, "shepherd" is transitory, one that shifts from the Lord to the man whom He promises to send. Receiving that man is made tantamount, by the Lord's very own testimony, to receiving Christ Himself. This claim, that the Lord's shepherd will be a sin-overcoming man from our midst should not surprise the Bible student for he will know that the Lord started His church with men of that exact same profession. Remember His champions of yesterday, "righteous Abel", Moses, his wife Zipporah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his beloved wife Rachael, David, et-al. Furthermore, in this re-commission of the shepherd, the shepherd cannot be Christ, for he is to enter through the Door, and even beyond that clinching point of evidence, in verse 11 of the same study, Christ likewise claims for Himself to be—not merely the shepherd but—the **"Good Shepherd"**. The Good Shepherd left His disciples 2000 years ago and then appointed a porter to guard the Door of the fold. Careful study distinguishes between the "Good Shepherd" and the "shepherd" whom He inspires to pass through the Door.

Unbeknownst to me in 1997, the time of my rejection of the two Madonnas, the re-commissioned shepherd, the man who now gives to me my "wonderful counsel", had already been on the scene for several years doing his work, making his calling—within Davidia, the fold—to the sheep. My name was to be called by him, Derek West, the *mustard seed*, nearly 10 years later. Leading up to that calling, more background and history is first necessary. Before the presumptive ascension to the post of "porter" by Sister Jemmy Bingham, a promotion given to her after the death of her husband in 08 of 1988 (888, eight, the prefigurement of a new order), the late MJ Bingham (MJB), correctly identified himself, with scriptural evidence, to be the proverbial porter. None else have ever beforehand even elucidated that post as an end-time, human commission from the Bible. But again, the title was not meant to be transitory, after his death, the saints merely needed to do what they failed to do: to likewise recognize its expiration and to wait patiently for the arrival of the Lord's shepherd. The wait would have only been a few years or more, since Brother Derek announced his avowal sometime shortly after 1992. Instead of this feat of patience and maturity, they sought her security, nuzzlement in Maddona's blanket.

A brief summary of spiritual leadership is in order: EG White led the SDA church from 1844 until her death in 1915. Then, 15 years later, VTH, the inspired leader of the *Rod* message emerged with the mantle of inspiration and he taught from 1930 until his death in 1955. Then, five to 15 years later, MJB began his forwarding work. Again, he passed in 1988. Why then could not the "patient saints" have waited for another four to six years thereafter for the Lord's appointed shepherd? How would they have known of his identity? Without a full dissertation, the simple point can be made that, to identify the shepherd, we can know from the Bible that someone of MJB's anointing during the era of his guardianship, was to enter into the fold by the permission of MJB, the porter for to the shepherd, **"the porter openeth."** This, Derek West has done; he was invited, in 1979, by written invitation from MJB, to join him in his work as a "hunter", one who calls the sheep. He also meets all other Bible criteria. This reception of the shepherd, obviously, was MJB's pre-eminent assignment. Thus has the shepherd passed through the Door by permission of the porter, and we have proper accounting of the personalities of *John 10*.

Having a shepherd is a major manifestation of growth for he leads the sheep, and his leadership nullifies the need for a porter, one to watch. Commensurately, the shepherd's authority is not limited to the empowerment to open the Door by himself, but he is also empowered to lead the sheep in and out. To do the latter requires the performance of the former: ***"...he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out...I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."*** —John 10: 3, 9. Resultantly, before the advent of the shepherd, all sheep were to be, of necessity, confined to the parameters of the fold, the Bashanian quadrant of the SDA church. But after the entry of the shepherd, he himself is capable, indeed commissioned, to open the Door for the Door, representing Christ, is a permanent fixture; unlike the porter, He will never be laid to rest; after all, it is His fold, and to lead the sheep out, It, the Door, must accordingly be so maneuvered. The only one who expires is the porter. Ergo, by reason of necessary redundancy, the shepherd, appointed by Christ, has the power to now expertly perform one of the porter's assignments, to open the door. This he needs to do to find pasture for the sheep. Beyond these very salient points, I can now unfold the meaning of this development to all who read this dossier of mine: for the shepherd to open the Door is a concept akin to one opening a closed book. It means for him to expose the nature of Christ; accordingly then, the shepherd reveals to the sheep, the ones who respond to his 'name calling', the very name/identity of the Lord. Thus are we told, ***"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send IN MY NAME, he shall... bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*** —John 14: 26. Not only does this expertly define the work of the *mustard seed*, none in history until now have correctly identified Jesus, Christ, and Father to the church, neither have any expertly reminded us of Christ's testimony, but this is also why, as stated above, his emergence is a major development.

My exit from the fold seemed, to many observers, to have been premature, but I credit the Lord's guidance. In final analysis, I never left the fold, instead, I, like many others who have repelled against Sister Jemmy Bingham, appropriately rejected the need for a spiritual mother in my life. Independent of her, I had an unconscious yearning, to be about my Father's business. For this, I did not need Madonna, the mother of Jesus; the watchman's job had expired. Instead, I needed the Lord's shepherd to reveal to me Christ and the Father. Like all Bashan Davidians, I needed someone from the fold which she inherited to become my shining, morningstar, one to honor Jesus, not as a baby in Mary's arms, but as a man who is in control of the Kingdom. He was to allure the sheep, and I am glad that he, the light of the Kingdom, called me by my name.

Furthermore, Bashan's zeal to forge me into an Adventist "sheep stealer", had I succeeded in that occupation, would have shapened me into a different character, one who pretentiously and surreptitiously taught the *Rod* by the modus operandi of a bygone era. Such an approach is more akin to a corral than to a call. It does not rely upon honest and meek people to respond to the Lord's voice by their own heart-softened prompting, but to come to Him by virtue of a con game. Such an approach would suggest that it is intended to extend light and truth to people against their will and objections suggesting that this light is loathsome, reprobate, and worthy of the villainy which the enemy has attached to it. Like all assets of the highest value, the church should yearn, indeed beg for it. To follow the opposite tactic, to beg them to come, is to cheat the Lord's Kingdom of the character of dignity and nobility associated with all of His gifts.

***"It is to the thirsty soul that the fountain of living waters is open. God declares: 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.' To souls that are earnestly seeking for light and that accept with gladness every ray of divine illumination from His holy word, to such alone light will be given. It is through these souls that God will reveal that light and power which will lighten the whole earth with His glory."*** —EG White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, 729.

Though clandestine evangelism may have been approved for proverbial Jacob yesterday, today his name (tactics) was to be changed, and now I understand that the Lord intended for me to unite into His work under the auspices of that new-name. Now I rejoice that I boldly refused to grovel to receive Bashan's approval. I can do as I did: I can, by my own studious efforts, determine righteousness in my life. After all, Bashan cannot lay claim to my ascension into Adventism; it was the Lord who prompted me to invest hours of study for growth. He made me thirsty; then He led me to the fountain. Being a growing

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man, I had to withdraw from the oversight of a guardian. Just as Jesus made clear this, His purpose, to Mary when He, at age 12, announced to her His day of emotional independence by saying, **“How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”** —Luke 2: 49— just so does a mature saint, so as to perform his mission, no longer require the coddling affection of his “Madonna”. Prepared for this new calling from my youth, I had installed within me the power of detachment of myself from the influence of both women. Only upon this determined step, will I ultimately become accredited with victory over Catholicism, the religion in which all Christians are deeply rooted. I now can see that such was the calling of Bashan, her place in the Lord’s plan of redemption: Her manifest destiny is to grow the church for this day of maturity. In fact, all Davidians who fail to unite with the shepherd, will be, by technical definition, regarded as Madonna-nuzzled, spiritual Catholics, people who, rather than “thirsting” for the fountain themselves, seek illegal entry into the fold by their allowance of someone else to secure their station in the Lord’s Kingdom. We had to have anticipated this day, the time when someday, the Babe in the manger, Jesus, would grow to find His own security and extend that blessing of empowerment to His maturing saints, His shepherds who are to call His sheep.

Speaking of those maladies, EG White (EGW), the prophetess to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, at the very beginning of that movement, had a dream which perfectly depicts my path to the Lord. As revealed in her dream, as was she, I too was in a state of complete despondency and gloom, the thing that, in her dream, she called “abject despair”. EGW being inspired of God represents Davidia, the people who, nearly some 180 years later, are to close the work in triumph for that same church, or, as she puts it, they are **“souls that God will reveal that light and power which will lighten the whole earth with His glory”**. Their misery and “abject despair”, as cited in her below quote to describe Davidia, signifies their infancy, their need —like a crying baby of disconsolation— to be wrapped and nuzzled in swaddling clothes and nurtured by their mythical, gentile comforter of the Christian saints. She is needed because they do not know Jesus, the Man; they wrongly feel that He, being distant and detached from their lives, is harsh and uncaring, a ruler who needs to be persuaded by another person of greater compassion, and that He is a Man who only has one parking space, Bashan, for His chariot. EGW’s dream which depicts this hour of transition likewise does not allow for a porter, someone to watch and protect the sheep. In maturity, they must do what EGW is shown to do in that dream, the adult thing: They must rise to their feet and, on their own strength, follow —not an angel, not a deity, but— the man whom the Lord sends to them. He is described as a man of beautiful countenance, and as depicted in *John 10*, he is to open the Door and beckon to them to come. Her dream, perfectly harmonized with the Bible and the *Testimony of Jesus*, is recorded as follows:

**“Soon after this I had another dream. I seemed to be sitting in abject despair, with my face in my hands, reflecting like this: If Jesus were upon earth, I would go to Him, throw myself at His feet, and tell Him all my sufferings. He would not turn away from me, He would have mercy upon me, and I should love and serve Him always. Just then the door opened, and a person of beautiful form and countenance entered. He looked upon me pityingly and said: ‘Do you wish to see Jesus? He is here and you can see Him if you desire to do so. Take everything you possess and follow me.’ ”**

**“I heard this with unspeakable joy, and gladly gathered up all my little possessions, every treasured trinket, and followed my guide. He led me to a steep and apparently frail stairway...”**

**“Finally we reached the last step and stood before the door. Here my guide directed me to leave all the things that I had brought with me. I cheerfully laid them down; he then opened the door and bade me enter. In a moment I stood before Jesus...As His gaze rested upon me, I knew at once that He was acquainted with every circumstance of my life and all my inner thoughts and feelings.”**

**“I tried to shield myself from His gaze, feeling unable to endure His SEARCHING eyes, but He drew near with a smile, and, laying His hand upon my head, said: ‘Fear not.’...At length my strength returned, and I arose...”**

**“My guide now opened the door, and we both passed out. He bade me take up again all the things I had left without.”** —EG White, *Early Writings*, 79-81.

By carefully analyzing this above dream, I now can see that it perfectly reflects the Bible’s promises, and it gives me hope. It shows that since EGW describes herself as following a man and since he leads

her to Jesus, then this man must be the end-time shepherd promised in *John 10*. He could not be Christ for Christ is the Door that he is described as opening to her. Also, the man could not be the porter either, for he does the duty assigned to the shepherd, he calls the sheep and leads them out by opening the Door. Hence, he carefully defines the identity of both Jesus and Christ, and such shepherding brings to them what EGW described as “unspeakable joy”. Notice, when the man whom EGW followed to the Door fully opens it, meaning, when he fully reveals Christ, she concedes that all the hidden things of her life are exposed. In fact, upon opening the Door, EGW describes herself as being intimidated by Jesus’ searching eyes, His need for her to expose the secrets of her life to Him. Put another way, she is reminded that ‘Jesus knows every circumstance of her life and her inner most thoughts and feelings’. Jesus, the One who died for our salvation, represents that very gift in this dream, Salvation. What is most remarkable about this aspect is that the man who led her to Jesus had to become versed in the same thing, the hidden secrets of the lives of the disciples, because he stood with her in the presence of Jesus and Christ. This could be a reference to nothing other than the communion which is described in *John 13*, the feet washing episode, the time when the disciples are compelled to unveil the sins and reproaches in their lives as symbolized by the removal of their shoes and socks. This we can know for the Lord cannot wash our feet, the symbolic path of our lives, so long as we cover them with socks and shoes; hence, our salvation requires our abasement before the searching eyes of Jesus. In keeping with this new approach to salvation, we must prepare for the day when our shepherd will become informed by our very own testimony of the sins and misdeeds that we have committed in our journey through life.

Speaking of that very journey, after emotionally limping away from the throne of Sister Bingham being distraught about my path to salvation, I, needless to say, returned home disoriented and, in boxing parlance, “down for the count”. Only by the light of my counselor can I retrospectively discern that, after having my interfaith relationship with my Baptist-female friend rejected, I began a long circuitous path to the feet of Jesus. Perhaps, by my enforcement of that decision, I began my rise to nobility. Yet, not discerning until now the resolution of the matter, having lost all of my spiritual connections, and devoid of none to maternally console me, it was indeed as if I was “**sitting in abject despair with my face...in my hands.**” The expression, “sitting”, shows that I did not know how or where to stand and walk. I was without direction. The face, also being prefigurative of one’s own unique identity, and the hands, the work which they must do, both metaphorically expresses the plight of all saints who leave the embrace of Madonna, saints who finally escape the clutches of Protestant leaders who, in fact, act as if they were enmeshed in Catholicism, Protestants who urge men to bow in obeisance to a human intercessor, a coddling idol, to Mother Mary. All such pulpit-elevated leaders are now frustrating Father’s work and must therefore be decried as thieves and robbers; the voices that are to make this indictment are to come from the Lord’s flock, people of the pews. The very act of such a censorious denunciation from the pews manifests the maturation of the laity, a day when they can, themselves with the leadership of Christ’s shepherd—himself standing likewise in the pews—choose the good and refuse the evil. This is exactly the place where the Lord desired for His future champions to be, the “**souls that God will reveal (the) light and power which will (emblazon) earth with His glory.**” They, and only they, are prepared to receive Jesus’ grace while living. It brings us to a day that was intended all along for the Christian commission, a day when the laity grow to cry out, as adults, not for Mary’s intercession, but for a connection to Christ. Mary makes the point because being figurative of the Christian ministry whose historical over reach of authority has done what actual Mary, the mother of Jesus, sought to do with Him at age 12: She sought to restrict Him from deploying His talents to execute His “Father’s business”. Of course for a disciple, any disciple, to become the censor of the ministry, the Door must first be opened to him so as to allow him to carefully climb to the final heights of righteousness. Only then can he so judge. Once that level of independence is achieved, once the disciple learns to place his destiny, his face, in his own hands—a thing that mature adults do—then God will send to him the shepherd to open the Door to salvation. As discussed already, growth takes time, and time requires patience to sit and wait for the day when the shepherd makes his call. To underscore this point, reiteration of Jesus’ discourse with Mary is in order. He, Himself learned this exact same process for at age 12, the Bible reveals His despair with her: “**And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?...And he**

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went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them...*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*" —Luke 2: 49, 52. Jesus also needed to wait for His anointing, the arrival of the Good Shepherd. Our visitation today, through His servant whom Christ sends, wins for us, at the close of time, the saving grace which Jesus extends in His own —not Mary's— mercy. Then we too can be like Jesus and reveal the light which is to lighten the world; this is, indeed, the Father's business to which He referred.

Entering into Father's business points to another expression by EGW in the above reference from Volume five, 729. It is a process which I hope to convey to all who have likewise fallen into despair. Quoting Isa 44: 3, she refers to the Lord's words, "*I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground...*" My ground was parched, but, in retrospect, my burden of departure from Bashan was a development made more grievous in my mind, not because there is safety in departure from the Lord but, because Bashan, some years prior to our very own, 1997 disengagement, had lost her divine validation by virtue of the fact that she had rejected the Lord's shepherd who likewise called out to her. This now helps me to understand that the process is not always quick, but the maturation is made perfect by the patience that we learn.

Departing from the sermon or application and reverting back to my journey, at the time of the rejection of Madonna, after returning home, it seemed to me then that I had reverted

***Back to "Square One"***~~~~~: then, in 1997, I was just a more educated sinner without a comforter to assure me of the Lord's involvement in my life. But, as God has done for other former Bashan associates, He prepared me from my youth for this hour. Locked into my mind were the simple, Bible revelations within the *little red book*. Complicating matters further, after arriving home from Bashan, my Baptist, lady friend informed me that she was pregnant. Our decision to abort the child has haunted me for years, and I do not reveal this formerly highly guarded secret nonchalantly. I have only done so by virtue of my connection to the shepherd and by his counsel, for, to be a *disciple indeed*, we must remove our shoes and socks, the secrets of our lives, and only then can we heed the Lord's command to love one another. Yet, publishing this expression of my misery and wretchedness is a step to Christ, the ordeal of which none who read should underestimate. Only now do I find a slither of hope that Father, as He has done with the other miserable failures in my life, will miraculously bring to me relief from my guilt. In fact, a former newsletter, published by this light, the *Mustard Seed Advent*, has already begun that process.

The other sorted details of my life estranged from the Lord during that period of spiritual despondency, the illicit sex, the gambling, the financial decline, etc., all caused me to fall deeper into emptiness, and the details are not uplifting enough to further belabor the reader's attention with those added words. Yet, one major point deserves acknowledgment: I did take a wife in May, 2000, but, apart from the two children, she was not a source of spiritual elevation either. In fact, she brought me back to my beginning, and that made matters worse because I was more educated during our marriage than I was as a young man. It was as if I married my old self —again making use of the metaphor "my face was in my hands". She, like me was detached from meaningful religion: Apart from being baptized as a baby into the Catholic Church, she had no spiritual energy to offer so as to grace our home, nothing that caused me to be elevated to my feet. This year, she too has slipped away from me and departed from my embrace. Yet, in spite of the cloud that shadowed me, strangely enough, deep within me was an understanding that, one day, the meaning of my falterings and failures would, as does this letter, be uncovered and revealed by me. How resolute and steadfastly restorative to me was that *little red book*: "*I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*" —Psalm 32: 5.

I had a sense that God loved me; I wanted His help; maybe by monitoring the activities and events within Davidia would keep me in arm's reach of salvation. After a time,

*I found the Shepherd*~~~~~: in 2007, I began to monitor through the internet a popular, Davidian forum so as to keep abreast of the events in the church. My faith and hope in God placed within me this impulse. Then it came: The answer for the cure to man's sinful separation from God, cleverly captioned to seize my attention, was there for the taking. On December 5, 2008 —after 10 years of the prodigality— a rather lengthy post was made on the forum by a small organization called The *Mustard Seed Advent*, but the caption, given in large, red letters immediately gripped my attention. Red is evidently the Lord's color of my rescue. It read as follows: “***This is a Level two Urgent Message to all Davidian Believers.***” It has become known, in my small circle of spiritual consorts, as the Atonement Letter. Therein, was the answer to a lot of my questions, especially about all the sins I committed!!! Another Text from the *little red book* came to me: “***And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.***” —Luke 18: 13.

I had broken every commandment that I knew of, both voluntarily and un-intentionally. This is the first time I ever heard of this differentiation and the different means to atone for these sins. What!? —I exclaimed from my reading of that letter— Jesus, Christ and Father were separate and distinct, indeed, different Personalities, and we can technically worship them without being Polytheist, without having multiple Gods!! Deep down inside, “***from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures,***” it was not difficult for me to accept that Jesus had a Father. I remembered the Text from the *little red book*, “***For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.***” —John 3: 16. But Christ, Jesus, and the Comforter all being different was something of which I had never before heard. Even though I was born and raised a Catholic, I was never really indoctrinated by her teachings as I did not attend church nor study what I was to believe as a Catholic. I accepted the doctrine of the *Trinity* when I came to the SDA Church as this was one of the doctrines they taught me in order for me to be baptized into the faith. It took me close to a month to read that Atonement publication, but by then I knew this was my next eye-opener.

I had found the Lord's appointed and promised shepherd, the one whom He was to send to open the Door, to open to the faithful, the identity of Himself. This embrace came on January 5, 2009; that is the day that I began my journey with the *mustard seed*, the author of the Atonement Letter entitled *Atonement and Amazingly Sufficient Grace*. When I asked for literature it all came with my name personally attached to a greeting on the inner page of the books —I was called by name. I then began my studies of the *Mustard Seed Chronicles*. During that time I was smoking, partying, gambling, Sabbath-day breaking —the whole nine yards. It would all end by the time I finished reading all that was then available. My abject despair was brought to an end; my face is no longer hidden in my hands. As you can see, this letter, written to the *mustard seed* for his publication is a manifestation of my work, my joint work with the shepherd. I have risen to my feet and now, joyously, yet carefully am advancing upward; the Door has been opened to me. The steps to the Lord's embrace require full maturity; thus, each one requires careful study and Bible validation for they unfold new meaning and surprising doctrines. Though, upon my embrace of this light, I knew I would learn of *new truths* as all doctrines were going to be validated; I could not envision any doctrines that would challenge me until the *Ordinance of Humility*, partially alluded to above. Like EGW, beforehand, I did not want Jesus to expose my sins. I praise God for victory in that regard.

Instead of continually hiding them, I have found power in the Word, power over the reproaches and sins which formerly have enslaved me. Now I look forward to the day promised to me from the *mustard seed*, the day which the Lord assured us would come in *John 16*, the day when all my sorrows are to be turned to joy. That will be the day when I become at one with the Father, the day when the Lord will use me to glorify Father and share with the world His love, mercy, and judgment —in essence the promise of freedom that I have found.

The Bible promised, in *Isa nine*, that Jesus would be called the Wonderful Counselor, but only now do we know that this label has come to its fruition, for His counsel, as revealed through His promised *mustard seed*, has made sanity out of the chaos in Davidia, in the SDA church, and, as especially

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revealed in this testimony, in my very life. I hope that others will be made stronger by this story of my steps to Christ.

Sincerely,

Emilio

### **RESOURCE LIST**

The following gives an updated list of recent releases from the Mustard Seed Advent. Please feel free to go to the above listed website for your further edification.

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	<b><u>TYPE</u></b>	<b><u>LENGTH</u></b>
22-Feb-2013	<i>Rejoice Ye with Jerusalem</i>	Audio	71 Min.
08-Feb-2013	<i>Inglorious Executive Wrath</i>	Audio	70 Min.
25-Jan-2013	<i>Peace Cometh After the Wrath</i>	Audio	69 Min.
11-Jan-2013	<i>Breast Feed with Jerusalem's Milk</i>	Audio	68 Min.
03-Jan-2013	<i>Pornography's Community Fight</i>	Newsletter	20 pages
28-Dec-2012	<i>Partnership Paradox and Tiberias' Bright Side</i>	Audio	79Min.
30-Nov-2012	<i>Peace &amp; Presidential Election</i>	Audio	75 Min.

Sincerely,

Derek W. West, Sr.