

GOD'S HEADQUARTERS, IS IT WACO?

(Part 1)

INTRODUCTION: It has become the position of some Rod believers that the headquarters of Elijah's message MUST be on the site of the original Mt. Carmel Center. To substantiate this teaching, they refer primarily to numerous statements from the early Symbolic Codes. The purpose of this study, is to view this subject in its full and proper perspective, which will clearly reveal that God's headquarters should not be on the original site located in Waco, Texas.

1. **We must study the Inspired writings from a FULL perspective.**

"The most common cause of doctrinal confusion among Bible students lies in their so very frequently failing to view a subject in FULL PERSPECTIVE from the writer's point of view,—a tailing which results in their seeing it from some foreign standpoint so narrowing their view that instead of gaining the writer's idea on the subject, they gain a false idea on it." *Tract 3, p. 91*. See also page 94.

"Remembering, too, that the practice of comparing statements stripped of their context is fundamentally disingenuous, and leads today to as many perversions and misapplications of truth as does the deliberate wresting practiced in Satan's challenge to Christ..." 1 Answerer Book, p. 48.

Therefore, if we are to understand this subject of God's headquarters aright, we must study **it in FULL PERSPECTIVE**—from the WRITER'S POINT OF VIEW.

2. **The Principle References for the Waco Teaching**

The following statements are the pillars of the Waco doctrine. According to Waco advocates, these statements prove that we MUST have the headquarters in Waco—on the original site.

- a. 1 *SC 10:1*: "In order to fulfill the call we must build the 'fort,' cast the 'mount,' set the 'camp,' and the 'battering rams against it round about— 'This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.' (Ezek. 4:3). Hence, the first question to be asked is, where shall we build? The answer comes from Him who 'is taking the reins in His own hands' (Testimonies to Ministers, 300): **'In that day shall Israel be...even a blessing in the midst of the land.'**" (Isa. 19:24).
- b. "As no one puts a light in a corner but in the center of the room, so the wise 'husbandman' built 'a tower in the midst of 'His vineyard.' . . .Consequently, the Lone Star state, being in the midst of the land for both Americas, North and South, is the place where we must set the 'camp,' so that the light may be equally diffused east and west, north and south. Moreover, the 'camp' from where the 'battering rams' are to be sent naturally

must be centrally located so that the distance between the 'rams' and the 'camp' may be cut down to one half, thus reducing the time and the cost for Transportation and supplies as well as for mailing."

- c. 1 **SC 11:1**: "Our company being composed of twelve members signifies that it is to represent the foundation of this central headquarters location of the **last and everlasting spiritual government.**"
- d. 1 **SC 16:1**: "We are happy to announce that the headquarters office of the sealing message moved from Waco to Mt. Carmel Center on September 29, to its new and permanent home location of the proclamation of the message of the 'True Witness to the Laodiceans.' "
- e. 1 **SRp 75**: "'Set the camp also against it;' that is, make a temporary lodging place for your workers, Headquarters from which to carry on the work, and make preparation to remain there until you have conquered the city. This is the devout purpose in building Mt. Carmel Center, this is its given goal."

3. **Understanding the Above Statements in Their Proper Context.**

The above statements are indeed true, but **MUST BE UNDERSTOOD ARIGHT**—in their **PROPER CONTEXT**.

- a. With the exception of the 1 **SRp 75**, all the above references used by Waco advocates, were written **before Bro. Houteff had the light on the kingdom truth**. Bro. Houteff did not receive the light on the kingdom until very late 1937. A perusal of the writings of Victor Houteff, would verify this fact. Note, therefore, that the above references (except 1 **SRp**) were written in 1935.

*Therefore, These statements cannot be used as proof **that** we **MUST** be **in** Waco today!*

4. **Before Having the light on the kingdom, Brother Houteff believed that Mt. Carmel Center would be a Theocracy, and that the 144,000 and the Great Multitude would be gathered there.**

3 **SC 2:3**: "In harmony with the foregoing command, Mt. Carmel has begun to enlarge the place of her tents, by doubling her acreage as announced in The Symbolic Code' of ; to stretch forth her curtains (organize—protect herself against all undesirable elements) by establishing a thorough organization after the pattern of the theocracy of ancient Israel..."

3 **SC 11:2**: "...Everyone who is well informed in the message that Mt. Carmel is proclaiming, knows that Mt. Carmel is in no way endeavoring to take any institutions, but rather is endeavoring to bring about that reformatory movement long-foretold by Sister White in 'Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 9, p. 126. However, it is true that we expect 'a 144,000' members from the SDA denomination to join

us, after which a GREAT MULTITUDE from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people is to swell our membership so greatly that 'no man could number' it."

5. **Before knowing of the Kingdom, Brother Houteff believed that MT. Carmel Center would exist up to the time of the final close of probation.**

1 SC 14:5,6 or 11 SC 12:30-33: "It might be interesting to Elder G. to know that the naming of our 'camp' 'Mt. Carmel Center' came about in the same way as the naming of our publications 'The Shepherd's Rod,' for we did not know before hand that it was in prophecy until after our attention was called to Mic. 7:14 and Amos 1:2....As Amos says, 'the habitations of the shepherd's shall mourn,' it is obvious that Amos's prophecy is yet future, for the word 'habitations' (places) is in the **plural** form which cannot be applied to one shepherd's habitation (**denomination**) but to **all that be in existence at that time...**

"The prophet Jeremiah in the following words explains that this wailing by those who are thus deceived will be at the close of probation. For they shall say 'the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.'" (Jer. 8: 20). That is, AFTER THE HARVEST, the time in which they could have been saved, they will realize that **probationary time has closed**. Then 'the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.' Hence, before that time the top of Carmel must have been green with much pasture, otherwise there would be nothing to wither; that is, though CARMEL has now plenty of pasture (present truth), WHEN PROBATION CLOSES it shall be deserted ('wither') for says the Spirit of Prophecy: 'In the time of trouble we all fled from the cities and villages.' —' *Early Writings*,' p. 34.

"...Then in their hasty, frenzied effort to acquaint themselves with present truth which went forth from the top of CARMEL, to their surprise they shall find that CARMEL has finished its work, its inhabitants removed, and PROBATION CLOSED...then it shall come to pass that 'They shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.'" (EMPHASIS OURS)

6. **Before Having the Light of the Kingdom, Brother Houteff believed that their stay at Mt. Carmel, Waco, Texas, Would Have Been a Short One.**

1 SC 14:5 or 11 SC 12: 30: "True we are establishing our headquarters on this mount that is found in prophecy, but our stay here shall be VERY, VERY SHORT..."

Note: That Mt. Carmel Center's existence was about twenty-seven years, (1935 - 1962). Obviously much longer than the earlier believers had envisioned. This phenomenon took place with **all** the prophets. No one messenger understands everything **all at once**. (See GC 343; 1

SM 66,67).

7. After Receiving the Light on the Kingdom, these Statements Must be Understood in their New and Proper Light.

After Brother Houteff received the light **on** the kingdom, the same references were explained revealing that they applied to the kingdom period, not now before Ezekiel Nine. The following references make this point very clear.

Read: 1 SC 10:1 & Isa. 19:24

"In that day shall Israel be even a blessing in the midst of the land.

a. "Thus in His infinite mercy would the Lord lift 'the burden of Nineveh' today, even as He did in the ancient day. Indeed, it is for 'a blessing in the midst of the land,' even to all nations, that He is to effect the church's liberation from 'Assyrian Yoke.'" **14 Tract p. 17.**

b. "In our studies we found that there are to be five cities in 'Egypt' that will speak the language of Canaan, and that there is to be a highway between 'Assyria' and 'Egypt' and Israel is to be a third with them, even a blessing in the midst of the land. . . Since Isaiah says they were ready to perish, it may happen just at the making up of the image of the beast..." **11 SC 7:23. See also 11 SC 8:13, 9 Tract p. 17.**

Read: 1 SC 11:1

"...the LAST and everlasting spiritual government"

a. "...that the law of the Lord during the judgment day of the living is to go from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem,-not from Takoma Park, not from Mt. Carmel Center, and not from some other place either." 1 TG 5:5.

b. "From these scriptures, it is plainly seen that Mt. Zion becomes the headquarters for the last gospel work on earth, after the time the 144,000 arrive there... longer from the General Conference, or from Mt. Carmel Center." 2 Answerer 48, 49

Read: 1 SC 16:1

—"...Permanent location..."

See above references.

Summary: We see therefore, that the references written before the light on the kingdom, CANNOT be used to prove that we must be in Waco today. Yes, God led His people there. But to use them and insist that God's headquarters MUST be there now, because of these statements, are disingenuous and misleading.

For Example: Sister White wrote in 17 206, 207, that it was acceptable to eat 'swine's flesh'—that is, pork—pig meat. In fact, she was rebuking someone who was condemning the use of swine's flesh. Obviously, at the time she made the statement, she did not have the light on health reform. *Would you insist that it is acceptable for someone to*

eat pork because of this statement? Would you argue that it is alright to do so because Sister White authorized the eating of pork? Yet this is the same kind of misapplication of Inspiration practiced by Waco advocates!

8. **How do we explain 1 SRp 75**
—“Remain There Until You have Conquered The City.”

1 SRp 75: “Set the camp also against it”; that is, make a temporary lodging place for your workers, Headquarters from which to carry on the work, and make preparation to remain there until you have conquered the city.”

1 SR 128 “Set the camp also against it”: That is, make temporary lodging PLACES. That thought is —make preparation to remain there until you have conquered the city.”

Summary: If by the statement, “make preparation to remain there until you have conquered the city,” the prophet meant the physical site, then he should have stayed in the headquarters hi Los Angeles, California, because the same instruction was given in California before he relocated the office to Waco. Therefore, the reference in 1 SRp 75, could not be interpreted to mean that we were never to leave the physical site—Waco.

Note: Notice, too, that the statement in 1 SR 128, he mentioned temporary lodging PLACES—plural, not place.

All of this reveals that the word “camp” is in the generic sense. It is not to be restricted to one location. It simply indicates that we must have a “camp”—a headquarters from which to house the workers and operate until the message has conquered the city. It is not referring to staying at the physical site in Waco, Texas.

9. **Was Mt. Carmel Center Found in prophecy?**

- a. It is often stated that the headquarters should be located in Waco because it was found in prophecy.
- b. 1 SC 14:5: “True we are establishing our headquarters on this mount that is found in prophecy, but our stay here shall be very, very short...It might be interesting to Elder G. to know that the **naming** of our “camp” “Mt. Carmel Center” came about in the same way as the naming of our publications “The Shepherd’s Rod,” for we did not know before hand that it was in prophecy until after our attention was called to Mic. 7:14 and Amos 1:2.”
- c. One will quickly notice that the NAME and work of Mt. Carmel is what Inspiration is hi-lighting—not primarily the physical place. Note that it clearly states, “that the naming of our “camp” “Mt. Carmel Center” came about in the same way as the naming” of the “publications.” Furthermore, the Carmel of the Bible (Mic. 7:14) is not a physical place so much as a “SPIRITUAL PASTURE.” Of course, you must have a physical place, but the emphasis is

on the spiritual.

- d. 1 **SR 243**: "Feed thy people with thy rod': The verb feed is to be understood as spiritual food, and that food (truth) is found in the 'Rod', therefore we again have the command to give out the book ('Feed thy [God's] people). CARMEL, Bashan, and Gilead are used as symbols of good SPIRITUAL PASTURE."

Note: ALSO, that Carmel withers at the slaughter of Ezek. 9.

- e. 2 **TG 41:7**: "'The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter His voices from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherd's shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.'
- f. "This scripture, you see, reflects the tragedy which took place on the top of Carmel in the days of Elijah. Here we are given the hint that there is to be another show-down between the prophet of God and the prophets of Baal."
- g. Inspiration here reveals that Carmel will not wither until the slaughter of Ez. 9—when the antitypical prophets of Baal will face God's judgment. Thus, Carmel is a "spiritual pasture," not primarily a place. Thus the headquarters, its work and name, are called "Carmel", not because of its location, but because of the message and its work.

10.

The Prediction of the Knockout Blow

- a. In 1951 Inspiration announced the coming of a "Knockout Blow." This reveals, that whereas in the beginning the early believers thought that Mt. Carmel would be the "last everlasting government," later on, just a few years before Bro. Houteff's death, they came to realize that the Davidians would have to experience a great disappointment. Very different from their earlier understanding.
- b. **White House recruiter**, p. 33: 'Unparalleled, therefore, is the urgency that every eleventh-hour church member now quickly and solidly brace himself against the Enemy's effort to deliver a knockout blow. We must be alert, too, to realize that the blow is to come from surprisingly unsuspected foes—from professed friends of the gospel...'

11.

The Selling of Mt. Carmel Center

The following references will show that Mt. Carmel Center had "fulfilled" its purpose, and it was in God's plan to dispose of the property.

- a. 10 **SC 1:3**: 'Now again, with even greater emphasis toward her goal, Mount Carmel Center makes the following announcement to all faithful Davidians who will realize that this good news is perhaps nothing short of a sign. Mount Carmel Center, by commencing to first sell its excess property, then the whole, is

symbolically leading the way to the program that is outlined by the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy..."

- b. 10 SC 2:13: "Yes, with the City coming to our very doors, the peach orchard must go..."
- c. 10 SC 2:17: "I am greatly impressed by the tilling I have seen and heard about the building up of Mt. Carmel in the early days and the progressive selling off of land tracts as its purpose is fulfilled."
- d. In June of 1956, Sis. Houteff published a discourse she gave to the residents of the Mt. Carmel rest home. The discourse reveals some historical facts that are in perfect harmony with the Inspired references above. (Keep in mind that this was before she strayed from the truth).
- e. 11 SC 8:20, 22: "In discussing this new undertaking with some of us, Brother Houteff emphasized the urgency of carrying out his part of the work (the selling of the excess property) without delay and as quickly as possible...And so it was that before Brother Houteff's death, Mt. Carmel successfully got under way the subdividing of about 35 acres. It was Brother Houteff's deep concern at the time of his death, however, that the subdividing of the rest of the land would require a great many customers which Waco may not have unless some new industries or other installations were brought into Waco, thus causing a need for more housing. And as I related to you in detail a few evenings ago, many changes later did take place in Waco, which materially altered our situation in regard to the selling of the land. Those changes were brought about by a variety of factors, chief among which were (1) increasingly sharper competition and (2) the new regulations and requirements of the city incident to our being taken into the city limits."

12. **God's Headquarters Cannot be within the City Limits**

1 SC 10:3: "One thing was clear in our minds concerning the new home for our work, and that was that we should have a RURAL BASE from which to operate—one with room enough to demonstrate that the Lord made no mistake when He told us through His messenger that we should be out of the city, and in an environment conducive to health, and one where we could care for the needy among us, and furnish employment to those who are learning how to give the message."

Note: Inspiration instructed the prophet to sell the property because the City was coming to Mt. Carmel Center (10 SC 2:13, 11 SC 8:20, 22). In fact, shortly after the sale of the property began, the City engulfed the site, and is still that way today. The property is now filled with high class residences, just as Inspiration had intended. (10 SC 1:6)

10 SC 1:6: "Be it, therefore, known that part of Mount Carmel property is being subdivided for high class residences..."

Why should we press to return there when GOD emphatically instructed His people to sell it because the City was coming? Why should we return when GOD emphatically instructed us not to have our institutions in the city? Would God go contrary to His own Word? **Would He tell us to** do one thing, then something else?

13. **God Closed the Door Not Man**

When we look at the following historical and Biblical facts, they clearly reveal that God did NOT intend for His headquarters to be reestablished in Waco.

- a. The Lord instructed His people to sell the property and it was sold.
- b. The site is no longer rural.
- c. The Lord predicted that there would be a “knockout blow.”—an event that involved the closing down of the Mt. Carmel Center.
- d. God did not stop the closing down of the Center. He allowed it.
- e. The Lord wanted the property to become an area for high class residence, and it did. Unbelievers now fully occupy what was the original site
- f. God even allowed the graves of the pioneers, (including V.T. Houteff), to be unearthed and relocated.
- g. There are no instructions from God to return.

14. **There are No Instructions from God to Return**

- a. When God told Judah that the temple and the City would be destroyed by the Babylonians, and the people would go into captivity. He also told them that the land would remain desolate, but after seventy years they would return. From this example, as well as many others, we see that God always advises His children ahead of time.
- b. In our time, God told our forerunners to sell the property, and that there would be a knockout blow which caused the Center to close down. He encouraged unbelievers to take over the property, THEN THERE SHOULD BE INSTRUCTION OR A PREDICTION THAT WE ARE TO RETURN. But there are no such instructions.
- c. We can remember, how God told Israel to take the promised land. But when the spies returned, ten of them gave a discouraging, faithless report. (Deut. 1:41, 42, Num.13, 14) After God told them that they would have to wonder forty years longer before entering Canaan, then a host of them “determined to seize upon the land and possess it. . . .The Lord had never commanded them to ‘go up and fight’ ” As a result, the rebellious host were “fiercely repulsed, and driven back with great loss...the army of Israel was utterly defeated.” (See PP 393,

394). Is it possible that the Waco issue is the same? That God has closed the door, yet we want to insist that we still return?

15. **The Conditions That made Waco Ideal Then, are Different Today**

The following Inspired statement reveals why Waco was ideal for its time.

1 SC 10: 1: "Consequently, the Lone Star State, being in the midst of the land for both Americas, North and South, is the place where we must set the "camp," so that the light may be diffused east and west, north and south...thus reducing the time and the cost for transportation and supplies as well as for mailing."

Waco was ideal because it was:

- a. In the MIDST of the Americas.
- b. Being centrally located it saved on TIME, TRANSPORTATION, SUPPLIES, and MAILING.

But you will notice that these conditions no longer apply to Waco. In the days of Mt. Carmel —between 1930-1950's, most SDA's were located in the Americas —primarily the USA and Canada. As time went on, SDA populations grew in Central and South Americas, and the West Indies. Thus Texas was then the ideal place to be to reach SDA's.

But now, the vast majority of SDA's are across the Atlantic—east of the Americas. (2 SR 297 & see SDA year books.) Yes, a large concentration of SDA's are in the Inter-American Division, but the majority are across the Atlantic—Africa, Europe and Asia. Note, too, that even the Inter-American Division, is readily accessed from the *Eastern Sea Board*. Thus, to be centrally located today, is to be located from the Eastern Sea Board, where one centrally can reach peoples all over the world, thus saving on time, transportation, supplies and mailing.

16. **Inspiration Prophesied that the East Would be Important in the Closing of the Work.**

- a. 17414: "According to the light which God has given me, there will yet be a LARGE COMPANY RAISED UP IN THE EAST TO CONSISTENTLY OBEY THE TRUTH."
- b. 7737: "Under the direction of God the mission in New York City has been started. This work should be continued in the power of the same Spirit that led to its establishment. Here let a CENTER for God's work be made, and let all that is done be a symbol of the work the Lord desires to see done in the WORLD."

Conclusion: We have seen That:

- a. The statements from the Codes (1 SC 10; 1 SC 11; 1 SC 16) were written before the light on the kingdom truth, and as such, this prophet believed that Mt. Carmel Center would exist up to the final close of probation and would gather in the 144,000 & Great

Multitude. Therefore, they CANNOT be used to prove that we MUST be in Waco, Texas, TODAY. Just as none of us would insist that we can eat pork because Sis. White authorized its use.

- b. The *SRp 75*, does not mean that we must remain in Waco, Texas. But that we must have a "camp"—a headquarters from which to carry on the work of reformation.
- c. That originally, before having light on the kingdom, the early believers had expected their stay in Waco to be "very, very short." They did not envision remaining there for twenty-seven years, selling the property, or a knockout blow.
- d. That God, through His prophet, instructed His people to sell the entire property as quickly as possible. One reason being, that the City was encroaching upon the site. Thus, we cannot go back, when God has specifically told us to leave and the area is now fully engulfed by the City limits—it is no longer rural.
- e. God predicted the knockout blow which led to the closing down of Mt. Carmel Center, and God allowed this to take place.
- f. There is no Inspired record or command to return.
- g. The conditions that made Waco, an ideal location for the work in the 1930's -1950's are different today.

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