Sept. 25

DEAR MR. FAGAN:

This letter is an addendum to my letter yesterday.

The women at the Brittney have told me that you are better versed in theology than any among the survivors, and therefore, I bring specific concerns to your attention.

In order to write this book, I've got to explain to the world what you all believe. Nobody in the press has done that. Before I can try to do that, I've got to learn myself.

I don't have much background. I'm now reading THE GREAT CONTROVERSY and also Ellen White's autobiography. I've got MINISTRY OF HEALING and COUNSELS ON HEALTH on order. I would appreciate any guidance you might give me.

But even while I try to ground myself, so that I can ask intelligent questions and understand the answers, there's one question that people are pressing on me. "Koresh claimed that he was Jesus, didn't he?" everyone asks—in a rhetorical way. It's the central message that the FBI communicated during the siege. It means: he deserved to die for arrogance.

In my talks with the women at the Brittney, and with Oliver Gyarfus II, who was more helpful than you might think, I gather that the truth isn't quite that simple—and I want to ask you to clarify what I've learned. The people I've talked to say that David believed that God (whether Father, Son or Holy Spirit, I don't know) had invested himself with human form many times in history: as Adam, as Eve, as King David, as several prophets (I don't recall which), as Jesus and others. David believed that he was a version of those incarnations.

It's my job to explain this to the world in as simple a way as possible. Here's what I see. There's a mathematical model that a lot of my readers will understand.

\[6 = 6\]

\[
\begin{align*}
6 + 5 &= 11 \\
2 + 4 &= 6 \\
3 + 3 &= 6 \\
4 + 2 &= 6 \\
5 + 1 &= 6 \\
2 \times 3 &= 6 \\
3 \times 2 &= 6 \\
12 \div 2 &= 6
\end{align*}
\]

The first relationship expresses identity (therefore three horizon marks, instead of two), the second ones, equality. The second expresses an equal result, but the look of the thing, the input, the particular form, even it's mathematical behavior is a little bit different.
It is my thinking that maybe David thought that he was equal to Jesus, but it's pretty clear to me that he didn't think that he was identical.

In any case, of course, what David was wasn't modeled on mathematics. But this may be a way to explain it. What do think?

If the model is acceptable, I want to add two questions to it. (1.) Did David think he was identical to anybody? (Maybe King David?) What would be the full known set of equalities be? I assume that we do not know all the incarnations that God has made on this earth. Am I right? (2.) There are an infinite number of mathematical equalities of six 4.5 and 1.5 for example. Are there a finite number of equalities to Jesus? My impression, from talking to people, is that we don't know how many might be possible because people don't develop their intellectual and spiritual possibilities.

Yours,

Dick J. Reavis
Oct. 6, 1993

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

I have finally figured out, or come to know, why I am pestering you about theology. What happened at Waco has to do with (1.) guns and polygamy, etc., or (2.) theology, or (3.) both. The trials are coming up. Other journalists, I suspect, are reading the ATF and FBI reports. That's the context in which they want to understand the trials. It's (1.).

I figure that the trials will explain themselves pretty much. I have the ATF and FBI reports, but haven't been moved to read them.

I believe that the trials will be best understood as (2.). So I'm trying to make sense of your theology.

I know that you believe that, as Ellen White said, "Only those who have a personal connection with the Source of wisdom are able to understand or explain the Scriptures."

Fine, but who decides? I have all of my life resisted letting other people tell me who I am, or who I'm not. I'm going to try to understand the scriptures and David's handling of them using whatever resources (spiritual, mental, financial) I have at hand. I can't do anything else. When that trial begins and the "evidence" begins coming in, I want to be able to see it, not as parts of the plot of cops-and-robbers movie, but as parts of the plot of a Biblical script.

All of which brings me back to the question of David's interpretation of the seals (which I still don't understand), and the events that would have accompanied the opening of those seals (which I might understand if I knew of those events.) You referred me to Psalms 1-150 for an explanation of the first seal. But I have the impression that the first seal has something to do with David and his "wives" (He says on the KRLD tape that he had "wives". And it's my impression that ya' ll don't want to talk about all of that. So unless I think I'm capable of inspired readings--why bother?

* You referred me to Zechariah 3 in regards to the events of the second seal. My first, perhaps naive, reading of that book showed me pictures of the capture of Mt. Carmel from George Roden circa 1987. But my second reading, this time of the whole book, made me doubt. What I see in the book seems to me to be that it repeats itself nearly; Zech 12 7-14 seems to refer more closely. But after seeing all of that, I got confused: are we talking about something that would have happened in Palestine, Texas, prior to the return to Mt. Carmel, or are we talking about what happened after the "shoot-out" with Roden? On the other hand, since Zechariah 3 mentions "the BRANCH", it could also have reference to Lois Roden or her husband.
Maybe we're not talking about any of this at all! The point here: no event, no key to interpretation.

There's no sense in my looking for events to accompany the opening the fourth seal if I don't even know what the possibilities are. Why don't you tell me what the events were?

It is one thing to say to the world, "here is the evidence, believe it or not". It is another to say, "we cannot give you the evidence because you will not understand it". The first is the stance, I'd say, of a church, the second, of a cult, the first of a respectable government, the second, of a tyranny. Insofar as you withhold information, nobody will try to understand you. They'll condemn you out of hand. One of the virtues of Christianity is supposed to be that it makes a universal appeal, not just to the chosen (historically, the Jews), but to the whole world. The Catholic church errs in thinking that only the clergy should know and interpret the Bible. But sometimes it seems to me that you're saying the same thing.

....On a brighter note. Last night I began to understand Ellen White. This, for me, was an accomplishment. So this morning I read the pamphlet, that Houteff's remnants were passing out to reporters during the siege. A reporter brought one to me and said, "Theology! Huh! You can't make sense of this!" She was right; I couldn't. But I've made progress. Now I can! I understand what Houteff says in the pamphlet. Among other things, he would think that we're living at the end of the 6th or the start of the 7th seal, depending, it seems, or whether or not an earthquake he foresaw has occurred since the time of his death.

It seems to me that he would disagree that David could have opened the first five seals, because David wasn't alive when these were opened, and these were opened in heaven. This makes me want to be sure. Did David open these seals, or merely interpret them in a new way? My impression is that he opened them (only he could have opened them) while living in Texas. But that leads back to the events. When? What happened?

Yours,
Oct. 11, 1993

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

At the end of last night’s conversations, you said, in effect, "I may call you at some time in the future, but brother, I’m writing you off for now". My failure is apparently that of not having accepted David’s message as the key to my salvation.

Your decision bothers me mainly because I sense your intelligence, which commends anything you might say. You give me things to think about—and right now, I can’t say that anybody but my wife does that. Some of us out here in Babylon are hungry for ideas, and they’re in short supply.

But if your purpose is to ensure my salvation, I can’t disagree with your decision to suspend talks with me. I am not intellectually prepared for most of what you say. This morning I read David’s exposition of the first seal—the computer disc text—and though I understand it better than I would have a week or two weeks ago, I still don’t understand.

It is one thing not to understand, and another, to understand, and reject. I insist on that.

I don’t say that what David says is false. I can’t make heads or tails of it. I have no idea whether or not it’s false!

The only contact that I had before all of this came up with anything resembling Christianity was a liking for the music of black gospel quartets. The only time I went to church was to hear a gospel group. I tried to read into Revelation a couple of times, but the only thing that I could connect it to, in my experience, was this: it read like a book written by someone
during an "acid" or LSD trip. The problem with that "understanding" of the book is that LSD didn't exist 2,000 years ago! Now you're tell me that this book can be understood without drugs. Well, I'm trying.

You must not confuse my purpose in all of this. I think it is important that people know who the Davidians were/are, know what befell you and why. To know you, people must know something about what you believe. The Bible was your guide during the siege, and helped shape the outcome of the siege. (Had The Manual of Abject Surrender, or somesuch, been your guide, the outcome would have been different.)

Your purpose is probably different. Your concern is that people know what is going to befall them, in these Last Days, and they take appropriate action in light of that. You want me to understand the Bible, human history and the universe as you do, so that I can issue warnings, too. At this point, I can only say that you issue such warnings, I cannot issue them myself. I don't know the present, let alone the future.

I have never in my life had reason to be certain of anything but my own sincerity. I have beliefs and opinions, like anybody, but my ignorance has been far greater than the scope of any of them. Right now I am in this world to learn, and if I am to believe, my ignorance must be banished first.

You will probably say that you've given me sufficient keys to wisdom, that it is my choice that deprives me of faith. People from the churches have told me that all of my life. I say, if the Bible is fact, faith will be a result, not a pre-condition
for understanding it.

Insofar as you make an effort to communicate with me, I will make an effort to understand, to read, think, etc. That has always been the deal I've offered people who bring the Bible to me. They've all given up on me before I gave up on them.

Maybe you won't.

Pick up the phone when you think it appropriate. I'm always ready to listen.
19 Nov. '93

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

Early today I bought Strong's Commentary. I couldn't find Koresh in it, largely because I couldn't make heads or tails of the Hebrew section. So I went down to the library, found an English-Hebrew dictionary, copied down the Hebrew and went back to Strong's, which does list Koresh as an equivalent of Cyrus.

So far, so good. But I can't find a meaning, either "life" or "death" or "death rattle", etc. How do you know what it means? (Incidentally, Strong's says that Koresh comes from the Persian.)

Today I also reviewed my notes of talks with you. I'm understanding the definition of David now, better and better. The sexual references are still vague to me. And there are a couple of things I overlooked. I'm making more sense of things now; but of course, that only leads to more questions.

In my notes you say, "There is an organ in the brain that is responsible for spiritual existence". In thinking this over, from the little that I know of anatomy, it seems like there's a part of the brain whose function the scientists can't explain: the pineal gland. They don't know what it's for. Is that it?

For the last several days I've been thumbing through Nave's index and other references--today with Strong's--and reading prophecies, mainly Daniel (again), but now with Isaiah and even one place in II Thessalonians. The thing about II Thessalonians (2: 3-4) is that it says something unusual, which
can't be taken as a reference to the man known to us as Jesus. It says "that a man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition". Is this about Satan or David or somebody else?

Lastly, just a thought. It seems to me that if God is the Word, etc., the Bible is not God, but the expression of the Word, or his expression. It's His Spirit written down. But that Spirit isn't dead, didn't die when Jesus did or when scribes wrote. It may still speak, but that doesn't stop life, or something living, something present, from speaking (as the churches seem to think). And if that's true, there can be new revelations or somesuch, new messages—so long as they don't refute the old. Or in other words, the Bible has to be the standard for judging new messages, but the last Word of God isn't spoken (unless it was spoken April 19?). I'm sure that something like this was in Ellen White's mind when she said that there would be a prophet for every age. (For the second time, where did she say that?)

Now then, if all of the above is more or less right, how many prophets have there been? My guesses: 7, 12 or 24. Is any of these right? Or do we know? It would seem that there would be a prophet for every age, but I have no idea how many ages there have been.

Ron Cole says that what happened at Mt. Carmel is laid out as prophecy in Nahum 2. But it seems to me that the book talks about what God is going to do to people, not what people are going to do to God—or that is, about something that hasn't happened yet. What is your reading?
Dec. 9, 1993

DEAR LIVINGSTONE,

During our last talk, I wrote down the scriptures that you cited under the headings that said, "Christ" and "Book". Here's what I get from them.

CHRIST

Some of those under "Christ" aren't right; I might have copied them down wrong:

1. Gen 1:3 (could it be Chapters 1-3)

2. Isaiah--55: 6-11 (there is no Ch. 55)

3. 10,17,20,21--from John? are these chapter or verse numbers?


Other questions:

From Hebrews 5: 6-12 & 7:1-3...I understand that Melchisedec is an order of priesthood, to which Jesus was named. The other order, I understand, is the Levitical order.

Apparently, Aaron was the founder of the Levite line; other priests (Abram? Levi) came after him.

Now then, Melchisedec was an earthly king, the Bible says, (Gen. 14:18). But Heb 7:3 seems to say to me that he wasn’t a mortal. Who was he? Melchisedec was Christ, so was Jesus. But time totally human. mel-

I see two possibilities here. 1. Aaron is type, and some latter-day Levite is antitype; Melchisedec is type, and Jesus and/or David are antitypes.

Or, David is Melchisedec. God—Mankind has period

How is it? where mankind has raised himself to consciousness where God can be revealed.

(An aside...Heb. 1:9 talks about "the oil of gladness".
I have read in newspaper accounts that David took this as a reference to vaginal fluid. I suspect he was joking, if he ever said anything like that. What’s the story?

1 John 1:5—I take this to mean that the speakers believe that fellowship with the Father can be had through the word, as if the word is God. Or did I copy this one down wrong, too?

Today’s inspir becomes tomorrow’s common know

I have Rev. 3:7 and 4:4 in my notes. But 4:4 doesn’t seem to apply. Did I copy down wrong? 4+ following chapters.

Heb. Ch. 1-3, or else Heb——, and Heb. 12: 18-26 are on my list, but I don’t see what they have to do with the book.

2 Cor. 12:1-5. I’d say that this refers to John on Patmos, (and therefore, indirectly to the book.) But wasn’t 2 Corinthians written before Revelation? If that’s true, is 2 Cor. 12:1-5 prophetic?

Well, at least I’m reading the Bible. I’m a long way from being able to trace out what ya’ll believed, but I’m closer, anyway. Thanks for your help—and call!

The idea of Israel is a spiritual concept. God’s children are spirits, not flesh. [Jacob first Jew] Rom 9, 10, 11 chps.
Jan. 25

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

I have xeroxed and mailed the two printed poems to you. Did you receive them? I have now read them, too. Of the two, I like "The Price..." best. "Free Spirit" contains lines like "The destruction... results from a transgression" that do not have a poetic ring. (Sounds like something from a manual.) The last stanza rhymes (doesn't need to) and the others don't. The best lines in "Free" are:

"Mt. Carmel was my marriage to her. /She is the truth of the Seven Seals."

"The Price" I wish I could publish. I could get it published, but now is not the time. It would make a great poem for reading - but there's nowhere to read it yet. (By reading, I mean reciting, or reading aloud.) It is much easier to understand than "Free" and the last stanza is absolutely powerful. "Our feeble response of gratitude" is real, original poetry, creative use of our language.

There is a riddle in it (as poetry, why not have a riddle?) that I won't you to explain. "Father, for your sake, forget us not." For His sake? Who are we (you) to
say that? But that's a theological question. In a poetic way, what the stanza says is that you sometimes feel that you're near the breaking point, that your humanity (perhaps not a cherished trait with you) sometimes gets you down. I wish the jury could read this poem.

What this poem is, is a Psalm, which leads me to the following speculation. The modern church has evolved away from its origins. It sometimes talks nostalgically about the early or apostolic church, but it can't get back to where it's been.

You guys, on the other, lived the life of the early church. You believed its doctrine on a latter-day, or cyclically higher level. In your scriptural search, you went back to apostolic clays, before the cannon. Now you are writing Psalms. Is this the recreation of the past by the future? What do we call it, futuristic or progresive devolution? It is not evolution; that, you say, goes downhill. (i.e. Adam was more than we.) But the resolution of everything is in the Seals, i.e., the future. With a vision of that, you're remaking the church from its roots. Does any of this make sense?

Send more poems! Or better yet, write the first of the New Gospels. You are the apostles; why isn't that your job?

—Ye
DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

I feel like the king (Nebuchadnezzar who can do all that?) who sent for Daniel. I have had a dream, just a few minutes ago, which concerns me and you, but I do not understand it.

I have always thought that dreams were interpretations of things that had already happened, but I am not so sure of this one. And it woke me in terror.

In the dream I was walking down a country road toward what you might call my country house when I came to a traffic circle that wasn't there before. One of the roads coming out of it is known to me, and I proceed down it, headed for home, as if ignoring the traffic circle. (Maybe this traffic circle is Waco; I know of two of those odd things there.) Pretty soon the terrain turns to desert, which is not the terrain of my place in the country. But the road is the same, so I keep walking. Then I pass a sign in front of a ranch. I now that the road down from it leads to Mount Carmel, though I cannot see it. I do see a sign, it does not say Mt. Carmel, but I know. I keep walking.

I do not know if I reached my home, but I know that I did not see my wife. I am still wearing "reporter's clothes", the get-up I have to wear to get into the courtroom (but do not like.) I am in a kind of three-story structure, but it is like a cave, shadowy, and dank, with bat-like creatures flying around. A group of men and women I take to be reporters are there. They are asking me what I saw on the road. I don't trust them, so I won't tell them what I know I saw. They seem to suspect that I know more than I am telling.

I find a telephone and am talking. I am insisting with somebody that "There are no ex-Davidians". My hearer does not want to believe this, or understand this. The telephone wires get crossed, and the sound goes out. A bat-like creature, whom I take to be a younger brother of mine, sweeps me downwards, though I am telling him, "but there are no ex-Davidians".

He drops me down a level or two, where a woman grabs ahold of me and saying, "but you have the virus. You must be inoculated"--sticks a shot needle into my arm. I go to sleep for awhile.

When I awake I go back upstairs. There are a bunch of younger people there, all dressed as techno-rockers. They have pale skins and dark, dyed hair. Some are women whose pale lips are painted in dark colors. They are standing in front of this big machine that looks like a guitar case, but on its side it carries the legend, "Chain Saw". Pretty soon they put one girl in it (the machine holds only one at a time) and close the door, locking it. The machine starts and she whirs off, like on an amusement park ride. Pretty soon she comes back, but no one seems excited, not even her. "It's a great cure for depression," they say, as everyone walks off, still quite passionless.
I somehow get into a dispute with one of the bat-like creatures. It hauls me down to the third, or bottom floor. A woman my age grabs me. She has the needle again. "But you have been infected with the virus, you must have the booster shot," one says. I struggle to resist but get the shot again.

When I'm awakening some younger woman, passionless like the techno-rockers, is with me. "But it's all going to go very badly for you. President Clinton is going to have your family at a town hall meeting, and your uncle Houston is going to make it bad for you, because you are a Davidian". I know all of this is not quite true, so I go looking for my Uncle Houston. He is a man whose son, age 42, died two weeks ago.

I find him. We are taking seats on logs. I tell him, "They tell me about the Clinton deal, and I know I'm to be paid $5,000 (visions of a decent car flash through my head), but I do not want to go on tv." I don't understand how he is going to make things bad for me, because his son was not a Davidian, and he knows nothing about the subject. I ask him. "You see, I am one of Schneider's people", he says to me. Then he rises and starts hugging another man.

I run off, and wind up back on the bottom floor and one of the bat-like creatures is trying to torture me, flying low and beating me with its wings. But after awhile I find out that its blows don't carry much force, and once or twice, I knock it down. After awhile almost a comradeship develops between me and it: it knows that it must beat me with its wings, those are its orders. It can keep me on my knees, or if I rise, keep me from going far, but that's all. I know that it can't do much else to me, and therefore, am not terribly worried.

Then all of a sudden a kind of door opens and a horrid, think, laughing male face sticks through. The face is as big as the door. The face laughs and howls and at me, as if I am doomed—and that's when I awake, literally in a sweat.

The Biblical David knew the meanings of dreams. I assume that the modern David did. (Am I right?) Do you?

Yours,

PS: This case could end real soon. You could be deported overnight. Please make sure that whatever, you stay in touch. Please also ask the others to tell me where they can be found. Most people expect you, Whitecliff and Branch to be convicted. I expect a general acquittal.
mission, this time for the benefit of not the wave sheaf (that was David wasn't it?), but for the 144,000.

In some sense I think ya'll are paying, and David paid, for the sins of the Religious Right, those people who want to pass laws that are in accord with the Bible. My understanding of your understanding is that ya'll would not have considered asking a human legislature in this day and time to enact your Biblical standards as law. Am I right? George Roden's run for the Presidency must have been in ya'll view a proof of his insanity? Am I right?

Now then, this is not a simple question, and I suppose you can't give me a simple answer. But here's what I figure. If Jesus was perfect (was he?), then Cyrus must also have been perfect: more perfect if possible. That's because he had no human parentage. Now, if Cyrus was the son of Father and Spirit, and Jesus was the son of Father, and only the son of Spirit after baptism (is that what you believe?), then what is David's celestial parentage, and how did it come about? Two people in Houston can't give birth to a Christ, and I don't think that you believe that David's perfect knowledge was an accomplishment which any mere mortal could have reached. At some point, David was elevated above the rest of even the most conscientious of us. How? When? (Israel, 1984? But still, 'how?)

Enough for now. I've thought of visiting you in jail, but I won't. I've been in those places, on both sides the bars, and they trouble me. (I was jailed over and over again as a member of Dr. King's movement, Alabama, '65-'66.) I've been coming home from the trial tired and depressed every day, I think, because the very idea that the trial is happening is depressing to me. Well, now at least it's almost over.

-Dr.

PS: This weekend I'll probably be in Dallas (214) 942-5659. If not,
May 16, 1994

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

As I’ve probably told you, I have a guide book to write, under a June 15 deadline. The nearer we get to that deadline, the more I’m pressed for time. The way writers live, life gets hectic as deadlines near.

Maybe that will explain how, though I’ve now read your 20-page letter, I haven’t yet looked up the scriptural cites, which I think, are the heart of the document.

I put it off thinking that I had to type the letter. Typing 22 pages, I estimate, will take me 15 hours or so. Finally, I read it, and said, “if I can read it, why can’t others? Maybe it’s not easy to read, but people who really want to know will do it. Typesetting is, after all, a convenience for the reader, not a necessity.”

Then I began to think that, with the last letter I typed for you, for example, you only wanted three copies. Fifteen hours is too much for three readers! So I went to my xerox machine and made ten copies of your letter. I’m keeping the original (unless you say otherwise), so that I can make even more copies, if you want. I’m sending you one copy, in this letter. And I’m sending a copy to Tabor and one to Arnold. If you want others sent out, just send me the addresses. Or, if you’d rather, I’ll try to send them in to you.

As for the text of the letter, scriptures aside, you tell me the basics of First Creation. If I understand right, there is still division between Lucifer’s forces and Michael’s forces in heaven. That’s far more dangerous than the atomic bomb! How do we know what the outcome will be, between now and the time Lu goes to the pit, anyway? Is there any way that our behavior can affect it?

As you can imagine, over the past few months my friends have become somewhat skeptical of me. I don’t know of a one of them who believes in the Bible. Most of them think that it should be burned! So they come at me with arguments. Yesterday one told me, "Oh, if the Bible is true, explain this..." And he ran down for me how 1 Sam 31:4 and 2 Sam. 1:9-10 give different accounts of Saul’s death. One says that he killed himself, another says that a young man that David met did it, at Saul’s request. Now, I don’t think this is very critical. I think that it would pass in journalism today. We would say that the first account is a simplified version of the second. Do you know anything else about it?

I have also been told that in the Bible, the figures given for one battle, in one place, do not agree with those given in another. And also, that the Bible uses round numbers: how can a round number be true? I am sure that you have encountered this kind of doubt before. What do you say to it?
July 3, 1994

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

What the hell is this?

Enclosed is a document. I need your help in interpreting it. One of the jobs that I've got to do is to explain to people what went on inside Mt. Carmel during the siege. This has several aspects, military, scriptural, psychological, etc. Nobody has really been very forthcoming about it.

In an attempt to find out, one of the things that I'm doing is reading transcripts of the tapes the FBI made from its bugs. These were supplied to me by defense lawyers. They had one transcription made, the prosecution, a different one.

You may even learn some of what went on from these tapes!

The transcripts are full of errors: acerian for Assyrian, Wayshape for wave sheaf, etc.

The first of them I've read, which is supposed to have been made on April 17 between noon and 3 o'clock, presents parts of a conversation that I believe was between that character Alanis and Steve Schneider. Alanis is wanting to leave, and is giving his reasons why.

Unidentified Male, probably Schneider, cites Deut ("Dudaron"!) 18 and Isa 52. I've read them and don't know what Isa 51 has to do with the situation that's being faced. Can you figure it out?

Look at Deut 18:10. Does this have to do only with witchcraft, or with the April 19 fire? If it's only witchcraft, what relationship does Deut 18 have to the siege? Why is it being cited?

Now then, look at the reference to Job 2 and Isa 13. Maybe Job 2 is about being asked to save one's life by denying God. Right? But what's Isa 13? I find in there a reference to the new mind/new body prophecy, v. 12, but that's about all--except v. 8, "their faces shall be as flames."

The indications here are that a fire was already expected, by whose hand, we do not know. Is that the way that it was?

Now, about Alanis. (In the transcript, he's called "Lewis".) I gather that everyone thought that Jesse Amen was simply nuts. But Alanis--what's the consensus? Police agent? A Pentecostal, after his visit as well as before?

CC: Jaime Castillo

P.O. Box 4830 Dallas, Tx 75208 Tel. (214) 942-5659 Fax 942-5390
July 18

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

This letter is in your response to your all-hope-is-lost missive from Coryell county, July 12.

Koreshianism, if we can call it that, is a text-based movement. It posits that (a.) the Bible is true; (b.) that a true, correct and harmonious interpretation of the Bible can be made; and that (3.) it has the correct interpretation of certain texts. As such, it is certainly not the first nor even the one-thousandth text-based movement that the world has known.

You’re not entirely ignorant of history. You should know how text-based disputes are resolved. A certain elite will always declare allegiance to any once-popular and well-honed interpretation of any document as important as the Bible. But by and large, text-based disputes are resolved by force. What does the Constitution really mean? Does it allow or prohibit chattel slavery? It took a Civil War to decide. Are the first Seal and Psalms 45 the same? The FBI won the armed encounter that was to decide that. What do the masses of people, and what do theologians think of Psa 45/First Seal? They think that the FBI decided that question! God did not visibly intervene on behalf of your thesis. You know far better than I do that people are not willing to read the Bible, let alone read it seriously, because it simply gets in the way of the lifestyle that they find "natural".

The circumstances that you all face in this regard are nothing new. The jails of many countries are full of men and women who lost struggles over text-based religious questions. And it’s not just religion. Che Guevara, the South American revolutionary, believed that Marx was the Bible. He theorized that there wasn’t much to be gained by arguing in parlors or the press. He coined a slogan, "In Revolution, One Wins or Dies"—and he died trying. At Mt. Carmel, someone—you or David or God—faced a similar choice for your life. Either you were to become the spokesman of David Koresh, and probably, fail to influence the world as much as you’d like—or you were to die, as the others did.

Now then, I rather suspect that the subtext of your letter is, "Reavis, you don’t believe! I am frustrated in my communications with you, because you don’t believe." So let me address that.

As I continue learning these things, I see that the question is not so much David Koresh and it is the Bible. I’ve never been able to make much sense of the book. Lately I’ve run onto a publication (by atheists, of course) that points out a series of contradictions in it. For example, 1 Chron 22:2 and 2 Kings 8:26. One verse says that Ahaziah was 22 years old when he began to reign, the other says that he was 42. What do you say to this? How can it be harmonized? Can we say that it is not important?

It seems to me that David was able to make sense of parts of the Bible that nobody could ever make sense of. His
explanations seems entirely plausible to me. Maybe he was King of the Bible, but is the Bible true? How old was Ahaziah?

I have been much more impressed lately by a film that I have seen. Maybe you've seen it. It involves a priest, a retarded guy, and a scientist. The movie is about "quickening", though, of course, it doesn't call it that. It ends in a fire, and a transfiguration of sorts. When my wife and I saw that, we said, "gee, this is prophetic! It tells the Mt. Carmel story before Mt. Carmel!" And we trembled, because we thought that God's influence is so strong that he can even make Hollywood write prophecy. (Is that possible? Do you know the movie that I'm talking about?) If that movie is prophetic, then maybe the Bible is true, in which case what David said is also prophetic.

But you must remember, when you get down, that your role as spokesman isn't supposed to be easy. The world is far more pagan than you suspect. Ellen White had it much easier. The world believed in the Bible then, and though she was a "cult leader", nobody was much concerned.

PS: Tabor, who apparently has written his book, has been asking me lately about the phantom child who was killed during the raid. There are references to this child in the tapes of the FBI talks until about March 6—and I don't know about anything beyond that. I had assumed that, as the saying goes, "Christ is a deceiver", and had not paid any mind to the question of the child's existence. Tabor thinks that the child did exist, and that ya'll won't say so because the child may have been killed by friendly fire. I imagine there would be a theological reason, if, indeed, the child existed. Maybe the child was the queen of Psa 45, for example--how am I, who doesn't know the Bible, to know about a theological question? Do you have any comment on all of this?

PPS: I lost your address! I don't have your prisoner number, bldg no. etc. Please send I have, but will hold, copies of "Christ" till then.
Oct. 21, 1993

DEAR LIVINGSTONE:

I was in Waco Sunday, 10.17 through Wednesday, 10.20, to meet old and new friends and watch the making of the Murray Povich show.

I imagine that people have told you what went on. The filming confirmed my worst suspicions about television, but one gets nowhere by expecting the world--television is the model of the "the world" that ya'll talk about--to change.

If any error was made on your side, I think it was this. The discussion was fought around the proposition, "If David Koresh and his followers were good guys, they would have sent the children out before the fire." Those on your side essentially argued that the FBI didn't have to burn people and place. As a collateral argument, they said that they didn't know that the fire was coming.

It seems to be that this is an entirely defensive strategy. It allows the discussion to be fought on the grounds, or the proposition, chosen by the opponent, who, it being television, did not so much chose that grounds as stumble onto it. Povich started out sympathetic, then altered his attitude in response to the mood of the crowd. (The whole thing was like an electronic lynching, Povich being Pilate in the modern world.)

I saw the whole discussion as a replay of my talk with you, when I defended Tabor and Arnold by saying, "but they were only trying to save human life, and that's the highest Christian value". You countered by saying, "No. The human soul is the highest value for all Christians." Or to put it another way, the highest value held by Povich, Breault and allied panelists, and the audience, is remaining alive. Yet they all (well, who knows about Povich?) claim to be Christians. Somebody should have called them back to the faith by saying, "We didn't start the fire, but we were prepared to die, and to see our children die, in defense of our faith. All Christians are. We know that our dead children will have eternal life. But you who criticize us can't be sure of that." Somebody should have made the proposition, "Our Christianity is real and yours is not" the topic--by going on the offensive.

Apparently, everybody feels too besieged to argue like that. Or maybe I'm a bad strategist.

The downside of my argument, of course, is that people would have called you religious fanatics. But they already have. I think the charge of fanaticism is inherently unfair. The question is, "what's true", and only once the answer is known--if it can be known--can we weigh fanaticism.
Another point. I listed to David's 58-minute tape on the way down to Waco, for the third time. Each time I understand a little more. In it he relates the Biblical passages that explain some of the seals. I asked several people to give me that information, and jotted down notes. My notes show the following:

1st—Rev. 6:1-6, Psalm 45
2nd—Psalms 2
3rd—Hosea
4th—Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Lamentations
5th—fulfilled

Now, I suspect my notes aren't good enough to guide me. First of all, it seems that the effects of the opening of each seal has to be described, and I assume the starting point is in Revelation. Then, there may be corollary scriptures in anterior or earlier books of the Bible. These would add description or explain the lines in Revelation. But then there must be events which mark the fulfillment, as with the 5th; when I asked about the 5th, everybody just said, "it's been fulfilled".

Phillip Arnold was in town, so I hunted him down and asked him about this. He said that yes, there were events which he somewhat mysteriously described as "private events" that took place between 1985 and 1992. Well, if they did, I sure didn't know about them! Arnold says that he can't tell me more. Can you? Can you send me a table that says something like Seal—Scripture—Corollaries—Event? Or is it that there are no such events? All of this puzzled me, because I had imagined that the first seal, at least, was opened in Ellen White's day. A SDA minister I talked to months ago told me that he thought that we were living in the time of the 4th or 5th seal, I forget which.

A second question, also raised by Arnold and my snail's pace understanding... The Revelation account of the fifth seal essentially says three things: (1.) some guys will be killed. (2.) there will be a wait of a little season. (3.) some more guys will be killed. (4.) there will be divine revenge. Now then, he says, what was March 19? Was it (1.) or (3.)? I asked one of the survivors of Feb. 28, and she told me that it was (3.)

Arnold points out that in his KRLD broadcast Koresh says that the fifth seal has opened—but when I listened to it, on the trip back, I think that I heard David also say that the 6th was opening. It may be that no one can clarify all of this now that David is dead, but I'd be willing to bet good money that you've tried to figure it out, because it is vital to you.

While in Waco, I talked at some length with three males
who were marginal on Feb. 28, all of whom I'd gotten to know last June. (I don't mention their names because I assume that jailers read these letters.) You will perhaps be cheered to know that I found all of them more enthusiastic than before. I have come to respect all three and it dismays me that not everyone shares my admiration, based on their past knowledge of those guys. It seems to me that this is a time like before in at least one sense: some people will draw closer, some will fall away, people will be gained and lost.

I will be in Mexico for most of next week, hunting for the grave of a famous journalist (in those days--before tv!--journalists were famous). I'm confident that I'll be back by Nov. 1. If you'd like to call me, you might wait until then.

Yours,

PS: I have gotten a recorder for my telephone. In the future, if you want, when you call I can record. I won't (and can't) record without your consent.