

Verne Howell aka David Koresh



Vernon Wayne Howell was pretty much your average Houston teenager. "Vernie," as the other kids called him, was a dyslexic high school dropout born to an unwed teenaged mother. Pretty typical. In 1979, he went to Hollywood to make it as a rock guitarist, but after only two years gave up and moved to Waco.

In Waco he became a member of the Branch Davidian Seventh-Day Adventist religious cult, led by 67-year-old Lois Roden. Vernon enjoyed a sexual relationship with the charismatic senior citizen. When Lois died in 1986, a bitter power struggle ensued between Vernon and Roden's son George.

When a majority of congregants sided with George Roden, Vernon's followers were forced off the Mount Carmel complex at gunpoint. They relocated to Palestine, Texas. It seemed to have been basically a peaceful schism, as far as your crazy religious cults go.

But truth be told, nobody was all that surprised when Vernon returned to Mount Carmel in 1987 dressed in camouflage with seven trusted acolytes. They had two shotguns, seven rifles, and 400 rounds of ammo. George Roden wound up with gunshot wounds in his hands and chest. Vernon and his squad were brought up on attempted murder charges, but none were ever convicted.

After the trials, Vernon was the undisputed leader of the Branch Davidians, but the whole experience had made him sort of paranoid. It attracted the attention of the [Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms](#) when they got into the business of selling guns. Beginning in 1991, the group began spending what would become a total of \$199,715 on inventory. The UPS guy was dropping by Mount Carmel on a near-daily basis to deliver their weapons and gun parts.

In 1990 Vernon legally changed his name to David Koresh. The paperwork stated that it was "for

publicity and business purposes." Koresh believed he was the reincarnation of both King David and King Cyrus of Persia; he had been appointed by God to rebuild the Temple and destroy Babylon. In other words, Koresh claimed to be the Messiah.

By that time, Koresh had already declared that he was owed at minimum 140 wives, and that he was entitled to claim any of the females in the compound as his. Evidently he had fathered at least a dozen babies by the harem. Some were girls as young as 12 or 13 when they got knocked up by the Messiah.

Understandably, federal officials were starting to get [Jonestown](#) flashbacks. Then the ATF got wind that the Davidians had failed to pay taxes on a bunch of machine guns that they possessed. So they mounted a now-infamous raid on the Mount Carmel complex in February 1993.

It was completely fucked up before the ATF even arrived on-scene. An ambulance company hired by the ATF leaked details of the operation to a local TV station. To verify the story, KWTX-TV dispatched photographer Jim Peeler who discussed the rumor with the Branch Davidians' mailman. The mailman turned out to be David Koresh's brother-in-law David Jones, who immediately passed the information along to the church.

When the ATF finally did show up, all 131 Branch Davidians (as well as a couple of local television news crews) were waiting for them. Not fully appreciating the seriousness of their situation, the ATF chose to plow forward anyway. A team sent to gain ingress through a second-story window were met with immediate gunfire.

All told, the abortive raid cost ten lives, four of them ATF agents. It was followed by a 51-day siege, coordinated under the auspices of the FBI. The siege ended only when Attorney General [Janet Reno](#) ordered that the Branch Davidians be hauled out by force, using FBI extraction teams backed by snipers and tanks.

Things went horribly wrong when something caught the place on fire. Based on the resulting arson investigation and audio surveillance conducted inside the buildings, it seems likely that cult members themselves lit three fires simultaneously, possibly as an ill-conceived defensive tactic. Surveillance tapes reportedly indicate Koresh discussing "spreading fuel" -- tapes which the FBI denied any knowledge of.

Not helping matters any were the FBI's pyrotechnic CS tear-gas grenades, which the agency *swore* had not been used, until they were forced to admit it six years after the fact. Further loss of life occurred because the FBI deliberately rendered inoperable all exits to the burning building, logic apparently dictating that in order to save the children, they had to destroy them.

[Timothy McVeigh](#) was one of the civilian spectators hanging around outside the perimeter. Two years later, he chose the Waco anniversary to blow up the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.



I AM THE SON OF GOD. YOU DO NOT KNOW ME....

Dear Brethren in the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

I Am the Son of God. You do not know Me nor My name. I have been raised up from the north and My travels are from the rising of the sun.

All the prophets of the Bible speak of Me. I Am The Branch, Isaiah 4:2; The Serpent, Isaiah 5:26; The Immanuel, Isaiah 7:14; The Root, Isaiah 11:10; The Holy One, Isaiah 12:6; The Voice, Isaiah 13:2; The Fiery Flying Serpent, Isaiah 14:29; The Lamb, Isaiah 16:1; The Stammerer, Isaiah 28:11; The King, Isaiah 32:1; The Righteous Man from the East, Isaiah 41:2; The Elect, Isaiah 42:1; The Ravenous Bird, Isaiah 46:11; The Loved One, Isaiah 48:14; The Sharp Sword, Isaiah 49:2; The Learned, Isaiah 50:4; The Arm, Isaiah 51:9; The Servant, Isaiah 52:13; David, Isaiah 55:3, 4.

I have been rejected in the person of My prophets over and over. I have seven eyes and seven horns. My Name is the Word of God and I ride on a white horse (Rev. 19:11). I Am here on earth to give you the Seventh Angel's Message (Rev. 10:7).

I Am the prophets; all of them. I want to invite you to My marriage supper. The invitation is in Psalms 45. Read it and confess that you don't know Me. I Am the Word of God. The key

of David is in My hand. I only can open the prophecies of David and Solomon. I have ascended from the east with the seal of the living God. My Name is Cyrus and I Am here to destroy Babylon (Rev. 9:14). I have come in a way that is contrary to your preconceived ideas. I will reprove you for your world loving. I will scold your daughters for their nakedness and pride that they parade in My Father's house and by My angels will strip them naked before all eyes because of their foolish pride. Read Isaiah 3:13-26.

The young men will abuse My kindness. They will take My life, but I will arise and take theirs forever more.

You ministers will lament your foolishness. Your lost flock will tear you to pieces.

I Am the Word and you do not know Me. I ride on a white horse and My Name is secret. Psalm 45 is My invitation to you for extended mercy. I will visit you at your unholy feast. Isaiah 3:13; 12:6; Daniel 2:44; Hosea 2:21; 2:5; 4:6; Joel 3:16, 17; Amos 1:2; 8:2; Obadiah 1:21; Habakkuk 3:13; Zephaniah 3:5; Zechariah 2:13; Malachi 1:11; 4:4; Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 190, 191.

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.

V. W. H. Jezreel

P.O. Box 1846
Palestine, Tex. 75802



**Verne Howell aka David Koresh
preaching
at the
Waco Compound**





An extremely rare photograph of several Davidians.

On the top row (l. to r.) are Perry Jones (father of Koresh's first wife and third wife), Michelle Jones (Koresh's third wife), Rachel Jones (Koresh's first wife), Cyrus (Koresh's son by Rachel), Robyn Bunds (another of Koresh's wives), Jeff Little, and Paul Fatta. On the bottom row (l. to r.) are Karen Doyle (Koresh's second wife), Star (Koresh's second child by Rachel), and Sheri Jewell (yet another wife of Koresh). All of these Davidians, except Bunds and Fatta, died in the April 19, 1994 Davidian blaze.



David Koresh with his first wife, Rachel Jones, and their first child, Cyrus. Rachel and Cyrus perished with Koresh in the Davidian fire.