



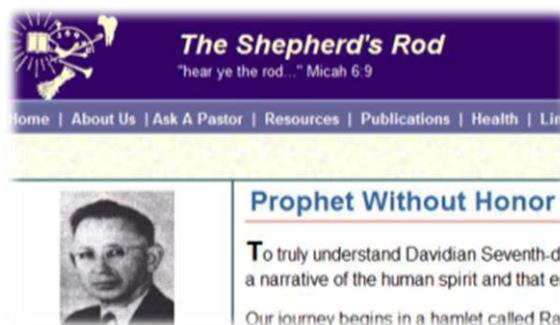
# Victor T. Houteff: Prophet of Truth or Deception?

Examining the teachings of the Shepherd's Rod

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The entire *Shepherd's Rod* (SR) movement, with all its branches, is based on one man – Victor T. Houteff. Though he is no longer alive today, he is still regarded by his followers as a prophet. One of the official websites of *The Shepherd's Rod Message* proclaims its purpose as listing the prophetic teachings of Victor T. Houteff. The biography page, giving the reader an introduction to who Mr. Houteff was, is entitled “Prophet Without Honor”<sup>1</sup>.



Thus, the teachings of the SR are really the teachings of Houteff. The two cannot be separated. Therefore, to truly examine the teachings of the SR we must first examine the claims of its “prophet”. If his claim to the prophetic ministry passes the biblical test, then it would be folly to ignore his message. If, on the other hand, he fails the prophetic biblical test it immediately means that his message, called SR, is false and does not have any claim to our attention or time.

Many people are not aware of this fact. They busy themselves with studying the SR message without first applying the biblical tests to its prophet. The foundation must be first examined before inspecting the building. For this reason we have provided the following short examination so that all may be informed.

## Victor T. Houteff and the Test of a Prophet

We are instructed by God to test and examine the claims of any “prophet”<sup>2</sup> before believing them<sup>3</sup>. The reason is obvious – there will be many false prophets<sup>4</sup>. A true prophet, then, must be in harmony with all previous true prophets before him. This is a simple and vital test to perform when the prophetic gift is claimed by anyone. This biblical test is found in the familiar passage of Isaiah 8:20.

*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.shepherds-rod-message.org/vth.html>

<sup>2</sup> 1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

<sup>3</sup> Proverbs 14:15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 24:11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

A “prophet” is to be tested by the law and the testimony. The words of a true prophet will harmonize with the law of God and the testimony of *all* previous prophets of God. One who claims to be a prophet may fulfil every other test, but if his instruction is contrary to the Bible and the testimonies, he proves himself to be false.

The prophet Moses gives us a cardinal test to determine the authenticity of any prophet:

*Deuteronomy 13:1-3* *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, (2) And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, **Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;** (3) **Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.***

Moses here provides a powerful test for any prophet. This principle is so important and cardinal that it is enshrined in the first commandment<sup>5</sup>. The test is simply this; a true prophet must only exalt the *true God* and not any other false god. Even if what the prophet says comes to pass, if he is found to be promoting a false god (or speaking in his name<sup>6</sup>) then he is not to be heeded. How does Victor Houteff fare when we apply this test to him? Did Victor Houteff promote the true God of the Bible or a false god? A brief survey of his writings reveals the following:

**“We know that the Trinity is best expressed by the use of the terms, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.** Likewise we express God's attributes in three terms, namely, omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence. This feature could be greatly enlarged upon. If three is the symbol of **the Triune Jehovah**, four must designate that which proceeds from Him, as revealed in creation.” Shepherd's Rod book, Vol. 2, p. 54 (emphasis added)

Victor Houteff believed and taught the concept that Jehovah is triune. We shall comment on that shortly, but lest some may be tempted to pass over such statements lightly we need to understand how Houteff regarded his writings.

“The Shepherd's Rod contains **either all Truth, or there is no Truth in it.**” Symbolic Code Volume 10, No. 1 April 22, 1932 (emphasis added)

And again,

“Therefore, if we admit one truth revealed by the “Rod,” then **we must accept it ALL.** ... Therefore, we take the position that **the message in the “Rod” is free from error** in so far as the ideas put forth are concerned.” Vol. 1 Symbolic Code No. 8 pg. 1 (emphasis added)

This claim means that the presence of only one error in the message will mean “there is no truth in it.” This is an all-or-none package we are dealing with when it comes to the SR

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<sup>5</sup> Exodus 20:3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

<sup>6</sup> Deuteronomy 18:20 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

message. Now, let's get back to the idea of a "triune Jehovah" that we just read about earlier. This is the concept of God that Houteff understands and believes in. He does not elaborate much on this idea, but this is clearly a god nowhere to be found in the Bible. The Bible never refers to Jehovah as *triune*; on the contrary He is expressly said to be *one*.

*Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD [Jehovah] our God is one LORD [Jehovah].*

Moses is positive in his expression. Our God is *one Jehovah*. The testimony of Moses was of such importance that Jesus Christ Himself identified it as a fundamental truth.

*Mark 12:29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord.*

This united testimony shows us the importance of this understanding. This is not some minor error when it is so plainly revealed in the Bible. This one Jehovah is none other than the most high Himself. Jehovah is the name of the most high *alone*.

*Psalms 83:18 That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.*

Jeremiah adds his testimony to David's in declaring that Jehovah is the true God.

*Jeremiah 10:10 But the LORD [Jehovah] is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*

And the highest authority on this topic, the Son of God Himself, makes it very clear who Jeremiah was referring to. In His prayer to His Father before His death He clearly identified who this true God is.

*John 17:1, 3 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father... And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.<sup>7</sup>*

This is the biblical view of Jehovah. He is not triune at all; He is only *one*. This *one* Jehovah is God the Father. This is our God if we are Bible believing Christians. This is how Paul expresses our faith in this one true Jehovah.

*1 Corinthians 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.*

It should be obvious by now that there is a sharp conflict between the testimony of the Bible and the testimony of Mr. Houteff. He does not pass the biblical tests for a true prophet, and as such we are told "Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet." This immediately indicates that his source of inspiration cannot be the true God, but the *triune* god<sup>8</sup>. There is really no need to pursue the other tests, for even if they are passed, the result is the same.

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<sup>7</sup> Paul agrees perfectly in his testimony that the Father is the true and living God. 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; (10) And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

<sup>8</sup> For more information see the video *The gods of Babylon* available online at this link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IPIBIDggP8>

## Summary

As we have used the Bible to test the prophetic status of Victor Houteff we have found that he fails the test of allegiance to the true God. The god that is promoted by Houteff is a *triune* god (called the trinity<sup>9</sup>) while the God of the Bible is *one* God. Let us summarise our findings in the following table:

<b>Moses</b>	Jehovah is one (Deuteronomy 6:4)	True Prophet ✓
<b>Jeremiah</b>	Jehovah is the true God (Jeremiah 10:10)	True Prophet ✓
<b>Jesus</b>	Jehovah is one (Mark 12:29) The Father is the only true God (John 17:3)	True Prophet ✓
<b>David</b>	Jehovah is the most high alone (Psalms 83:18)	True Prophet ✓
<b>Paul</b>	One God the Father (1 Corinthians 8:6)	True Prophet ✓
<b>Victor T. Houteff</b>	“Triune Jehovah”	False Prophet ✘

This is merely the testimony of a handful of true prophets, and yet it is harmonious and consistent. The same will be found if we examine the testimony of any other true prophet<sup>10</sup>. No true prophet will be found denying the most basic and fundamental truth of who God is<sup>11</sup>.

## Conclusion

There can be no doubt that the SR message contains certain elements of truth, for that is the best way to mask error and make it more believable. But the fact remains that its founder fails the biblical prophetic test, and therefore the message as a whole cannot be valid, regardless of the elements of truth it might contain. We have followed the Bible injunction to prove all things, and we find that the writings of Victor Houteff are wanting. His message is *not* free from error. The god that he promotes is a stranger to the Bible.

In his own words, Victor Houteff said it well.

“The Shepherd's Rod contains **either all Truth, or there is no Truth in it.**” Symbolic Code Volume 10, No. 1 April 22, 1932 (emphasis added)

*Matthew 12:37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*

Not only must we be careful before accepting any teaching, but we must be able to give an answer as to *why* we regard it as error. Let us be careful that we always apply the following words to ourselves.

*2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.* □

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[www.Revelation1412.org](http://www.Revelation1412.org)

<sup>9</sup> Early Seventh-day Adventists rejected and opposed the idea that God is a trinity. Historical evidence is abundant in support of this fact. The book [The Living Voice of the Lord's Witnesses](#) is one such example.

<sup>10</sup> Interestingly enough, Ellen White passes this test with flying colours. See [The Godhead in Black and White](#).

<sup>11</sup> For more information on the identity of the true God of the Bible visit: [www.revelation1412.org](http://www.revelation1412.org). There is a wide variety of resources and [studies](#) that deal with this important truth. Here is some recommended reading that can be downloaded and studied: [Building on Solid Rock](#); [The Wondrous Love of God](#).