



Books in Review

THE POPULAR DICTIONARY OF BIBLE PROPHECY

by Ron Rhodes

Harvest House Publishers, 340 pages, \$14.99

Where could one have over 350 terms and concepts regarding Bible prophecy defined and explained? Ron Rhodes' *The Popular Dictionary of Bible Prophecy* would be the answer.

Rhodes is incredibly prolific and his new book is an exceptional resource. He is always well-balanced and scripturally on target. With such a good track record we can have confidence in his handling of God's Word, especially in the much debated arena of prophecy and eschatology.

These are days of uncertainty and deception. Add to that the extremes we see all around us. There are those who are apathetic toward the Bible and those who try to twist the Scripture to fit into the latest headlines. What is needed is a sane, sound, balanced, and biblical approach to the end times. *The Popular Dictionary of Bible Prophecy* gives us that.

In the Introduction, Rhodes describes the design and scope of the book:

"The study of prophecy or the end times is known in theological circles as *eschatology*. This term is derived from two Greek words: *eschatos*, meaning 'last' or 'last things,' and *logos*, meaning 'study of.' *Eschatology* is the study of last things, or study of the end times. Eschatology can logically be broken down into two primary fields of study. *Personal eschatology* concerns things such as death, the future judgment, heaven, and hell. (These are matters related to each person.) *General eschatology* concerns more general matters, such as the rapture, the Tribulation, the second coming of Christ, the millennial kingdom, and the eternal state. For your benefit, this dictionary contains common terms related to both personal and general eschatology" (pg. 5).

Take the issue of America in prophecy. Some have gone off into wild and unbiblical extremes. For starters, is America in prophecy at all? Why or why not? That issue is treated in detail on pages 18-23 of the *Dictionary*. It will tell you what you need to know and why.

Others are puzzled by Amillennialism, Postmillennialism, and Preterism. Events such as the Tribulation are also examined. Places that figure into Bible prophecy are covered and include Armageddon, Babylon, Ephesus, the Euphrates River, Gog, Gomer, Laodicea, Sardis, and so many more. What about words such as Maranatha and Wormwood? Theological words not in the Bible, but which describe future events, are handled in understandable ways.

Is there a difference between Hades and Hell? What about Tartarus? You will find out when you look under the three names in the H and T sections of this book. Then there is the Old Testament word Sheol and the nuances we should know about that place.

Differences in prophetic viewpoints are not side-stepped, but explained. Readers at any level will easily grasp the explanations.

There are other subjects related to the major topic of prophecy. For instance, because astrologers claim to forecast the future, there are several pages examining the subject of astrology. Rhodes' apologetic skills are conspicuous as he gives us entries on Ultradispensationalism and Universalism.

There are entries on Blasphemy, Date-Setting, Death, Demons, and The Elect. Pages 281-284 examine Satan and all his titles and descriptions.

Another asset of this book is the overview of the prophetic books of the Bible. Brief surveys of books such as Habakkuk, Isaiah, Joel, Zechariah, Zephaniah, and others are covered. There are four pages detailing all of the Messianic Prophecies fulfilled by Jesus.

One might decide to teach from portions of this book or use the definitions for sharing with a class. Some of the topics could even make for a short Bible study. There are many ways to mine the contents. Get this book — you will be very glad you did. You and others will profit much from it.

—GRF

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