

The Merciful God of Prophecy: His Loving Plan for You in the End Times by Tim LaHaye with Steve Halliday.

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Tim LaHaye has made many significant contributions to the field of prophetic studies, but in this work he turns his attention to *theology proper* – to the God of prophecy. His goal in this book is to help the reader understand more about who God is by examining what the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles have said about His nature and character. Today God is often portrayed as a vengeful Being when viewed through the catastrophic events of prophecy, but LaHaye demonstrates that God's qualities of mercy, longsuffering, compassion, and forgiveness are clearly evident even in such prophetic portrayals. He states, for example, "If you want to know Jesus as he truly is, you cannot afford to bypass Bible prophecy."

One of his motivations in writing this book is that the popular representations of prophecy often seem to paint a negative picture of God's nature. "They completely misrepresent the loving nature of God and what he plans to do with the inhabitants of planet earth." LaHaye is convinced that even the frequently startling language of biblical prophecy is designed to express God's mercy, grace, and love. He suggests that God uses prophecy for at three purposes: to prove beyond doubt that He exists, to warn mankind of the coming tragic consequences of their own actions, and to encourage people to accept His gracious offer of eternal life and blessing. LaHaye is rightly concerned, because a correct concept of God influences what you think about yourself, how you spend your time, what you do with your money, how you handle interpersonal relationships, and ultimately determines the direction and quality of your life.

The book is filled with personal anecdotes, stories, and contemporary illustrations which bring home the authors' points. The appendices contain a helpful Question & Answer section as well as a complete discussion guide for use in a class setting. It is written for the layman and would certainly be appropriate for use in a Sunday School class, home Bible study, or church small group. If you are looking for a book that does a masterful job of answering the question, "How does Bible prophecy show us the mercy and love of God?" – then this is that book!

Reviewed by Steve Lewis, *High Peaks Bible Fellowship*