

[A Survey of Bible Prophecy](#)

By Arthur E. Bloomfield (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1971), 238 pp., (paperback).

According to the cover:

In the early days of his ministry, Mr. Bloomfield was a pastor in the Methodist Church. For six years he served as editor of HIGLEY'S SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMENTARY. However, he left his pastorate and other duties to devote all of his time to studying and lecturing on prophecy.

The book purports to offer a survey of Biblical prophecy, taking in themes from across the entire Bible. As one might expect, in only 238 pages this proves to be a daunting task with the result being that the prophetic framework which the author sets forth is lacking in tight Scriptural justification.

In his favor, the author interprets prophetic passages using a literal hermeneutic which leads him toward dispensational conclusions. He recognizes the distinction between Israel and the Church and accepts the reality of a time of tribulation yet to come.

The treatment of prophetic topics is not without numerous troublesome aspects:

- The author believes it is illogical for God to recreate a new heavens and earth. Instead, he holds that the Tribulation is about redemption (rather than judgment) and thus he summarily dismisses with any notion of a future conflagration and recreation (2Pe. 3:10-12; Rev. 20:11; 21:1).
- The author confuses the various biblical statements relating to half of Daniel's 70th week. As a result, he offers a chronological framework which holds to *three* periods of 3.5 years—one of which he inserts between the rapture and the tribulation (even though Scripture gives no precise timing for the period between the rapture and the beginning of the tribulation). One of the 3.5 year periods he sets forth as the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24)--rejecting the accepted notion that the vision of Daniel 2 setting forth a series of Gentile kingdoms has any bearing on the times of the Gentiles.
- The author develops a sort of dualistic prophetic path principle and seems to arbitrarily apply prophetic pronouncements to pairs of entities (e.g., northern kingdom vs. southern kingdom, Jews vs. Gentiles, saints in heaven vs. saints on earth). The author does not adequately support his ideas from Scripture.
- In some places, the author interprets chronological indicators precisely (as exact values). In other places—where exact values deny his conclusions—he attempts to justify finding fulfillment in approximations. This inconsistent approach to interpreting timing texts is too elastic and allows for making the biblical text “fit” unbiblical conceptions of the author.
- The author holds an unusual view regarding the role of church-age saints from heaven “pulling the strings” as it were behind various events on earth as elders,

living ones (the *zoa* of Revelation 4), horsemen, and angels. Not enough detail is given in the survey to understand the specifics of this scheme (which are presumably elaborated in his other book, “All Things New”), but what is said seems most unusual: “The elders, the living ones (A.V. Beasts), the horsemen, angels with trumpets and vials—all represent saints and groups of saints who are the agents of God in the execution of the judgments written in the seven-sealed book . . .”

Overall, I cannot recommend this book—even though some of the author's conclusions are reasonable. The chief problem with the book is that it leads the reader toward numerous incorrect understandings by “cherry picking” a smattering of verses that support the author's conclusions—all the while omitting important passages which serve to mitigate against such conclusions. What the author leaves out is as problematic as what he asserts.

The book is basically “unsafe” for anyone to read unless they are *very* well grounded in a systematic view of biblical prophecy. But for those who are well acquainted with biblical prophecy, the book offers little in the way of value other than suggesting some novel (if unscriptural) approaches to certain prophetic themes.

Reviewed by [Tony Garland](http://www.SpiritAndTruth.org) of www.SpiritAndTruth.org.