

Study Guide: “Why prophesy about the end?”

Carter Sanger, May 2009

Read Revelation 1:1-3, then discuss the following.

Introduction

What is your experience with end times prophecy?

I. The Nature of Prophecy

Before we consider the end times prophecies, we should get a handle on what prophecy is. What is its purpose? The opening verses of Revelation help us in that.

- How does John title his book (opening words of the verse 1)? What, or who, is being revealed?
- In verse 2, he expounds on this idea of revelation. What is he bearing witness to? How does this differ from popular talk about Revelation?
- All of Scripture functions as prophecy in the sense of verses 1 and 2. It is all testifying to Christ. The Old Testament presents Christ by way of promises and in the form of types and shadows. The New Testament does so in the form of fulfillment. All Scripture explains activity that God is doing in to accomplish his plan of redemption for his people. How can this inform your view of “end times” prophecy?
- If prophecy is always testifying to Jesus and expounding the redemptive work of God, then how are we to approach individual prophetic claims?
- If God’s word is sufficient for all aspects of life, how does this change our approach to Scripture and our desire for more “personalized prophecy”?

II. Eschatological Perspective

Eschatology simply means “a look at the last things.”

Read Matthew 25:1-13

- How does this challenge our living today? Should we be prepared for the “last things”?
- How does this challenge our need to be responsible about the future?

Read Revelation 20:12-15

- What will happen in the end? Does this change your view of the way you treat people today? Approach your work today?

III. Paradigm Shift

The original audience for Revelation was greatly influenced by Old Testament Jewish practices. Worship in the temple, daily and annual sacrifices, etc. were part and parcel to their view of how one approaches God.

- Read John 4:19-24. What does this foreshadow about future worship?
- If the Old Testament types and shadows were so integral to the worship of Jews, can you see the reason why the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem were necessary for “true worshipers” to emerge?
- What kinds of “paradigms” of yours might need to be shaken?

Wrap-up

Are you living in light of the end? Is your name written in the book of life?