

by that in making sure that we are not just critics of the problems but prescribers of what might make the situation better.

D. THE LATE, GREAT PLANET EARTH.

1. The Author

Hal Lindsey, who along with C.C. Carlson, authored the LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH, is a contemporary author and currently heads up a foundation for the continuing study of Bible prophecy and its application...among many other things. Lindsey was involved for many years with the Campus Crusade ministries and concentrated on lecturing on prophecy thus continuing the emphasis of his education at Dallas Seminary. Appalled by a general apathy and lack of interest, he prepared this work as a means of "shaking up the church" (my terms) and the reading world in general with regard to what he thought the prophetic schedule of God to be. It was the first of several books in the general area from his pen and eclipsed most of the literature of its day in popularity and interest. His colleague, Carlson, served in the areas of style while the content ideas seemingly were Lindsey's. I am not as well informed on this, incidentally, as on the books that were written years ago. One of the sad things of history is that it never does well by one until one has been dead for years. Lindsey is still writing.

2. Of the Book:

The LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH is first a study of fulfilled prophecy with regard to Jesus' coming and second an analysis of things to come. In the latter the author becomes very specific with regard to lands, world movements, and particularly developments in the middle east. His major thrust is to show the outworking of the Divine program and to warn modern society of our proximity to these things. The book sounds a general alarm which, to those who understand things as the author does, is a brightening concept while to those who do not it is a death knell. (I am not treating the prophetic understanding of other Christians who disagree with the analysis.) Eventually the book gives some of the author's own prognostications which, in my judgment, are mostly generalities based on the understanding of our own time.

3. The influence of the book:

Students unsympathetic with the Lindsey scheme have not been laudatory in discussing the influence of the text. It is not easy to assess. In popularity the book reached enormous heights. Going through successive printings more than 2,000,000 copies were sold in the first three years of publication. It far, far outsold anything on the New York Times "Best-seller" list for two full years...my data does not go beyond that point. (These secular publications ignore Christian literature in their reporting of sales...otherwise the Bible would lead the list most of the time.) It produced a rash of "counter" books, none of which made much headway. And it stimulated a renewed interest in prophecy that