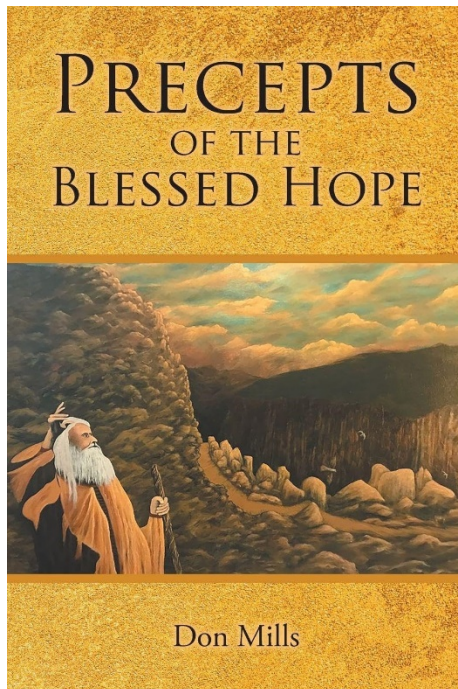




PRECEPTS OF THE BLESSED HOPE

Don Mills

Blessed Hope Publishing

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Clarion Rating: 4 out of 5

An inquisitive theological exercise, *Precepts of the Blessed Hope* interrogates biblical verses to argue that the rapture will precede tribulation.

Don Mills's musing religious treatise *Precepts of the Blessed Hope* focuses on dispensationalist theology regarding the concept of rapture in the Christian scriptures.

Anticipating a pretribulation rapture in which the church will be removed from earth before a seven-year winnowing period begins, the book treats biblical narratives as prefigurations of the church's fate. Each chapter concerns one text or a set of parallel texts, walks through their details point-by-point, and closes with a summary.

The stories of Joseph and Asenath, Isaac and Rebekah, and Ruth and Boaz are examined in support of the book's timeline; the details of each story are said to anticipate the church's removal prior to humanity's judgment. The related evidence is figurative, though: Joseph's marriage to Asenath is considered in parallel to the seven years of famine that followed in Egypt; Isaac's marriage to Rebekah and Ruth's marriage to Boaz are highlighted for the periods of ease preceding each union. Much is made of the fact that in all three stories, hardships and marriage were kept separate; indeed, the book argues that the parallels they draw between marriage, timing, and deliverance are clear.

Elsewhere, Revelation is also deconstructed from this figurative perspective, with John made to represent the raptured church and the twenty-four elders made to represent saints crowned in heaven. The book's later sections extend their purview to other texts to further support the central thesis, with considerations of textual features like the elect and the ten virgins included.

Block quotations of scriptural verses appear throughout, interwoven with commentary to draw connections between one passage and the next. The related arguments are image driven, confident, and focused, though also somewhat circular, with examples chosen to support the book's claims and the book's exegesis not moving far beyond these. Statements like "the Bible does not reveal a ruffed up bride in any of the stories we've looked at" prove quite casual at the expense of the text's ultimate persuasiveness.

Indeed, the book often leans into typological connections at the expense of deeper interrogation. Several full-page engravings are included to illustrate key points, as with an image of Ruth gleaning in the harvest field with a diagram mapping a sequence of related claims onto a photograph of a wheat field, though these condense several chapters' worth of arguments into a single visual reference point. Short poems appear at the start of several chapters as well, stating the chapters' central claims in verse without adding to their clarity.

Precepts of the Blessed Hope is an earnest theological tract that argues that the rapture will precede tribulation.

Reviewed by [John M. Murray](#)
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