

Th. Thess. 1: 7 11

SUBJECT: The Purpose of
Prophecy

D 4158

GP

Is Thess. 1:716

THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY

1. The longing of men to know the future ^{saved, would}
Isa, II Thess. 1:4-7 ^{the X², troubled, persecuted} } ^{godly, godless.}
^{the false leaders of things} } ^{that way from?}

Any high man: Is there purpose, meaning in living? ^{life!}
: ready out toward a goal, a commitment?

Prosci, utilitarian reasons: National preparedness
Economic projections
Business & personal.

But above all: the universal, underlying belief in
another life beyond the grave. Into the mystery, that
life man has always tried to pierce. Standing on the
shore of the unknown sea - looking into the mist, infinite
space. A friend - a father - a child - and me -
(a) The why unity for me.

2. Methods men have followed to know
the future.
Ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans.

ORNITHOMANCY - careful observation of flight of birds, to right,
left, above, below.

HARUSPICRY - elaborate systems of divination based
upon the precise examination of the viscera of sacrificed
animals.

ORACLES - as the Pythian Oracle at Delphi. A vast
Tyrus - question asked - priest - answers to questions
(pythia) seated in tripod deep in a vast cave.

ASTROLOGY, HOROSCOPES - divination of the
future by the location of stars, planets at time
of birth, etc. Scores of newspapers carry daily
art. on devoted to various horoscopes.
(Continued in the Bible: Gen. 4:19; 18:10
24:47; 13, 14.)

SPIRITISM, MEDIUMS, NECROMANCY - the art
of revealing the future by communication with the
spirits of the dead.

PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATION - the golden
dream of Plato, "Republic", "Symposium",
Harrington's "Oceana", Francis Bacon's "The New
Atlantis".

3. The tragedy of following human schemes of prediction - disillusionment, despair, disappointment.

(1) Spiritism
(a) Rudyard Kipling

(2) Philosophical speculation, Utopian dreams.

(a) Tennyson, *Trilby* Hall

(b) H. G. Wells - all his hopes of a new-made millennium crushed on 40 years, shattered by war, war, especially the atomic bomb. Did disillusionment, leaving out the most tragically pessimistic literary legacies ever penned: "Mind at the End of 15 Years".

4. It is the pre-rogative of God to disclose the future. He is the unique characteristic of the Bible, the God-faith, that it alone has "prophecy." All other religions, as Islam, Buddhism are man-made, no prophecy - would not. But God foretells, prophesies...

(1) He knows the future. He sees the end from the beginning
Isa. 46: 9-11.
God has a purpose, a plan, a goal.

(2) He reveals His purpose, (the future), to His prophets.
Amos 3: 7 - So Gen. 18: 17 (Jn 15: 15)
Dan. 2: 27, 28

(3) Christ the great prophet of many predictions
Lent 18: 15; Acts 3: 22; 7: 37; Gal 1:
So Mt 24, 25, Mt 13, & Parables

(4) The word of the N.S.
Jn 16: 13

(5) It is the content and vocabulary of the Holy Scriptures.

The whole story, a revelation of the purposes of God.

The first - Gen. 3:15

To Abraham - land, power, empire
- seed - Isaac.

To Moses - giving tablets, Pentateuch. ultimate revelation

To David -

To Jeremiah - 70 years

To Isaiah - the coming Messiah, birth, death, resurrection

To Daniel - the whole course of history

The NT revelation - Jesus, the Kingdom of God.

The vocabulary of the Scriptures.

"The end" - the time of the end? "The end" - the "inward"
"The last days" - "the time of the end" - fulfilled?

until: Mt 21: 28; Mark 11: 22
Lk 21: 26; I Cor. 11: 23-26
Jas 5: 7; Rev. 20: 3, 5

(6) modern use of apocalyptic language

5. For hope is despair.
No student of prophecy a man of despair.
f. Isa 6: 10 when they died, saw the Lord -

For light
D 1: 19 "more sun was, prophecy"

Our Day of Crisis Has Compelled The
Use of Apocalyptic Language:

of the much advertised picture above, "The
Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse"

of the vast literature created by the
explosions of the atomic and hydrogen bombs.
Almost no references in this literature of
class to Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, even to the
Greek fathers, no reference at all to oriental
literature, only rarely a quotation from a
modern author as Emerson, Browning, Alexander
Pope. All seem forced to go back to the old
book finished 1900 years ago, the language of
the Scriptures.

Fortune magazine, (1946) a short but
fearfully realistic one act play, widely
circulated in pamphlet form, by Dr. Louis
N. Ridenour nuclear physicist, of University
of Pennsylvania & MIT. Title: "Pilot
Lights of the Apocalypse"

Mr. John M. McCullough Washington
Bureau of the Inquirer, after interviewing the
Bikini atomic tests: "This - atomic
energy for military purposes - is the
fifth beast of the Apocalypse."

Dr. Frederick Z. Schramm, Woodrow
Wilson Professor of Government in Williams College,
wrote most significant book on Russian history and
politics in this generation, Soviet Politics at
Home and Abroad: "Atomic energy

promises a new epoch of abundance
for all; but its immediate aspects
confirm the fears of Tertullian
who predicted that wicked angels
in bringing to man knowledge
of the elements would bring war
along with wisdom. In New
Mexico, the site of the test explosion
of the first atomic bomb was
called the "Journey of Death."
Nuclear fission suggests less
the conversion of the earth into a
paradise than the opening of the
ninth seal of the last judgment,
when "then was a great earth-
quake, and the sun became
black as sackcloth of hair and
the moon became as blood."

again. "Bolshevism is not the
Beast of Revelation, as many
outraged Christians and capitalists
have long assumed. But the
atomic bomb already recalls
the fire of wrath poured out by
the fourth angel: "And power
was given unto him to scorch
men with fire. And men were
scorched with great death, and
blasphemed the name of God."

Dennis de Rougemont, brilliant
French writer, The Last Trump:

"The bitterness of dying also
springs from the thought of
missing the next installment
of history. That is perhaps why
the first Christians, believing in
imminent judgment, died
gladly under the reign of the

Tyrants of the time. St. Paul
wrote to the faithful in Corinth:
'Behold, I show you a mystery;
we shall not all sleep but
we shall all be changed in
a moment, in the twinkling of
an eye, at the last trump.'
Do you know what the Greek
text says where the French
translation reads "in an
instant"? It says, - *en*
atomo - in an atom.

[I looked up: I Cor. 15: 52
'*en atomo*]

As I stand ^I by the cross on the
lone mountain's crest,
Looking over the ultimate sea;
In the gloom of the mountains
a ship lies at rest
And one sails away from the
sea.

One spreads its ^{II} white wings
on the far-reaching track
with pennant and sheet flowing
free;
One hides in the shadows with
sails laid back,
The ship that is waiting for
me.

III

To! in the distance the clouds
break away;
The Gates glowing portals I see;
And I hear from the outgoing
ship in the bay
The song of the sailors in glee;

IV

And I think of the footprints
that bore
the comfort o'er dark Galilee
And I wait for the summons
to go to the shore
to the ship that is waiting
for me.

Lord Tenison, when about 30 years old,
published Locksley Hall (1842)

Men, my brothers, men the workers,
ever reaping something new:
that which they have done but
earnest of the things they yet
shall do.

For I dipped into the future, for
as human eye could see,
saw the vision of the world,
and all the wonder that would be

.....
Till the war-drum throbb'd no
longer
and the battle-flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the
Federation of the world.

Authors - essayist, athlete, novelist,
realist, rhymer, play your part,
Paint the mortal shame of
nature with the living hues
of art.

Do your best to charm the
world, to lower the rising race
of men;

Have we risen from out the beast,
then had into the beast again?

Warless? war will die out
late then. Will it ever? late
or soon?

Can it, till this outworn earth
be dead as your dead world,
the moon.

A critic of that time wrote of this famous poem: "The eager impulse to advance is lost within a growing gloom, as the wise old poet contemplates a nation fallen on evil times."

[But never do the prophets in the Old & New Testament writings come to the end of their days so, even though they had spent years in prison. But gloom never rests upon any who have made the prophet in their study and embraced their as they hope, a hope that makes not ashamed... Rom. 5: 5; Heb. 6: 11, 19]

Rudyard Kipling:

The road to Endor is easy to tread
For Mother or yearning Wife;
here, it is sure, we shall meet our
dead
as they were even in life.
Earth has not dreamed of the
blessing in store
For desolate hearts on the road
to Endor.

Whispers shall comfort us out of
the dark -
Hands - ah, God! - that we knew!
Visions and voices - look and hark!
Shall prove that the tale is true.
And ^{that} those who have passed to
the further shore
may be hailed - at a price -
on the road to Endor.

Oh, the road to Endor is the
oldest road

and the emptiest road of all!

Straight it runs to the Witch's
abode,

as it did in the days of Saul;

and nothing has changed of the
sorrow in store

For such as go down the road
to Endor!