

4. Some observations: There is a course in the Seminary curriculum in the prophetic literature so we do not make many emphatic observations at this time. We note the following:

a. In prophetic interpretation we think the basic hermeneutic of the literal method is still valid. There are some special hermeneutics governing prophecy with regard to language and speech figures as noted in an earlier section but the overall principle is still one of literal interpretation unless there is some contextual matter or open statement to indicate otherwise.

b. Some limitations are imposed on prophecy that need to be observed for the better understanding.

(1) It does not intend or attempt to give a total history of predictive events but rather limits its field to the things related to Israel and the redemptive programs of God.

(2) It depends on history for the understanding of its fulfillment. Its truthfulness does not wait for history but its understanding is demonstrated in an historical setting.

(3) Although its specific points are abundantly clear, its broad aims often allow for over-specification and this may, unless one is careful, make the prophetic Scripture (the predictive passages) appear erroneous or even childish. Over-specification is to be avoided. Think Mussolini was the Anti-Christ if you must...but keep it to yourself.

c. The major predictive themes seem to be these:

(1) The promised deliverer and the promised deliverance. (Gen. 3, Isa 14, Zech. 12, etc.)

(2) God's overall plan for the creation (Isaiah 65-66)

(3) God's claim for the affection of His people and for a proper response on the part of all created parts of the universe (the other nations)

(4) God's care (including chastisement) for His people in ages past and those to come.

(5) The concept of God's Kingdom...His rule and His peace.