

for a walk in the country. So I read the forecasts in the paper and they said rain, so I stayed home and I worked, and it was fair, clear, and dry all day, a perfectly beautiful day. The second day I looked at the forecast again. It said rain. I stayed home and studied; it was a clear, beautiful day. The third day it said rain. I stayed at home and studied, and it was a beautiful day. Now there was only one day left. I had no choice, and anyway this day the paper said fair and clear. So I thought, "How wonderful that I will have a good day to walk." I started out walking and I hadn't gone more than an hour when it began to rain, then it began to pour, and half the day it drizzled and the other half it poured. If they had stuck to their forecast they would have hit it right eventually. Well, I think there are sections of the country in which it is possible to forecast rather definitely what the weather will be, but in sections like this where you have various currents coming together, the probability of hitting it right as much as 24 hours ahead still remain rather slight. This year, the times I have noticed, I don't think more than half the time have the predictions been correct. To forecast the future just 24 hours ahead is very difficult.

During the World War, I expect many of you remember, how we heard all over, Once this war is over there will be such an opportunity for Christian work in the Orient as the world has never seen. The Chinese are so appreciative of what the United States is doing in helping them against the Japanese aggression, the people are so friendly to the Americans, there's an interest in Christianity such as we've never seen. Once this war is over Christianity will just sweep over China! You know what happened. The war finished, the Communists moved in, our own government held back all aid to the Nationalists unless they would make a coalition with the Communists, which was handing things over to them. Instead of that the Chinese government chose to fight without any aid from us. They were gradually driven out and within the next two years, the Christian missionaries, one after another, were driven out of China, until today there do not remain more than three or four missionaries in China and those are in prison, the exact opposite of what everybody predicted. I never heard anybody predict what actually happened. It is very, very difficult to predict the future.

Now Mohammed, I think, was aware of the difficulty in predicting the future. In the Koran he tells us about the last judgment. He says that people will all walk on a narrow tightrope across a great gulf and those who have no belief in God will fall down into the gulf. Of course, the followers of Mohammed will walk across nicely. He does give hope that the followers of Christ may have special aid given them so that many of them will succeed in getting across. He has certain predictions like that as to what is going to happen at the end of the age, but in between he makes no predictions as to what is going to happen. He played it safe on this. He never made a false prediction.

Among the Greeks, the ancient Greeks, there were those who claimed to predict the future. There was the so-called Delphic oracle. Here at Delphi there was a priestess who would mutter certain sounds and the priest would listen to her and he would interpret, and if you sent a sufficient gift to the Delphic oracle you would find out what you should do in any particular situation.

Cyrus, the King of Persia, at about 545 BC was moving westward with his army. He conquered most of Asia Minor. The eastern half of Asia Minor was held by Croesus whose name has become a synonym for great wealth. Croesus, the richest man in the world at the time; Croesus, with his great empire over which he ruled in luxury, found Cyrus had conquered the regions next to him and had come right to the borders of his empire. What should he do? Should he sit back and wait until Cyrus would attack him also, or should he march out and endeavor to defend himself? Croesus sent a messenger with a good gift to the Delphic oracle. The Delphi oracle returned the answer, "If you march out and cross the