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COVENANT COLLEGE  
LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, TENNESSEE

Chapel Message, October 2, 1972 by  
Dr. Allan MacRae

THE EVIDENCE OF FULFILLED PROPHECY

Since it is one of the greatest prophetic books ever written, the Book of Isaiah is a good place to begin our discussion of prophecy. Let us start by looking at Isaiah 41:21-24. Here Isaiah presents the Lord's claims as against the idols and the false gods of the heathen. Speaking directly to these false gods, he says: "Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth you."

Thus the Lord declares that the gods of the heathen do not actually exist, and challenges them to prove the contrary by giving information about the future. Surely it is fair to turn the question back to the One who asks it. Can Isaiah's God predict the future?

I myself have long had a particular interest in one type of future prediction because of the fact that I like to take long hikes, and am not fond of walking in the rain. As a result, I often have considerable interest in Philadelphia weather forecasts.

Some years ago there was a time when I had four days free. I desired to study on three of these days and to hike on one of them--I did not care which.

On the first day the newspaper forecast said "Rain," so I stayed home. However, it was a beautiful day.

The next day the paper again said "Rain," and I stayed home. Again it was a beautiful day.

The third day it again said "Rain," and I stayed home. Again it was a beautiful day.

On the fourth day the paper said, "Clear and bright," so I took the train for a distance and then started to walk. Before an hour had passed the rain began to pour down. If the forecasters had only stuck to their first statement they would have eventually hit it right!

The weather forecasting service is probably far more accurate in many other areas than in the Philadelphia area, since that is in a region where many currents come together and it is difficult to say which will be dominant at any particular time. Yet this illustration showed clearly how difficult it is to make predictions of the future, even with the extensive facilities possessed by the weather bureau.

Those who belong to my generation can easily remember the many wonderful missionary talks that we heard during World War II. We were frequently told how much the Chinese people appreciated the work of the missionaries and the help of the American soldiers during the war. Over and over we would hear a missionary