

1. The Intelligibility of Prophecy

- a. The usual view of this subject has been that prophecy is not intended to be fully understood before its fulfillment, . . . Prophecy is a wonderful combination of the clear and the obscure.
- b. It is the view of Dispensationalists that prophecy is intended to be plain and fully intelligible before its fulfillment This view has been more concisely stated in the words, 'Prophecy is prewritten history.' . . . The fallacy in this claim will be clear when due weight is given to the following considerations.
 - (1) The use of figurative language -- symbols, parables, etc. -- is far more characteristic of prophecy than of historical narration.
 - (2) Not only is the language of prophecy often figurative and parabolic, it also differs from history in its frequent lack of precision and definiteness.
 - (3) The same principle applies to prophecies which might be regarded as perfectly simple and plain.
 - (4) From a practical standpoint, the clearest indication that prophecy is not 'prewritten history' consists in the fact that there is in many cases such a wide difference of opinion among commentators as to whether certain predictions have been fulfilled, and whether, if fulfilled, this fulfillment is to be regarded as complete and final or as only partial or 'germinant.' "

-- Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1945), pp. 16-28.

5. John F. Walvoord

"It is generally agreed by all parties that one of the major differences between amillennialism and premillennialism lies in the use of the literal method of interpretation. Amillenarians, while admitting the need for literal interpretation of Scripture in general, have held from Augustine to the present time that prophecy is a special case requiring spiritualizing or non-literal interpretation. Premillenarians hold, on the contrary, that the literal method applies to prophecy as well as other doctrinal areas, and therefore contend for a literal millennium.

In a somewhat less degree the same hermeneutical difference is seen in the pretribulation versus the posttribulation positions. Pretribulationism is based upon a literal interpretation of key Scriptures, while posttribulationism tends toward spiritualization of the tribulation passages. . . ."

-- John F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question* (Findlay, Ohio: Dunham Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 56-57.

6. Martin J. Wyngaarden

"What is meant by spiritualization, or the spiritual interpretation, in this connection? The spiritual interpretation, here concerned, is that which is contrasted with the view of the Premillenarians, who hold to the so-called literal interpretation, -- happily not consistently, as a rule. . . ."