

We noticed last night that there have been those who claim to predict the future by making ambiguous statements. A most interesting illustration of that is the so-called Sybilene Books, in ancient Rome. According to the story we read in ancient history, in the early days of Rome, a woman came to one of the leaders and told him she had 9 books that would enable the Roman officers to tell what was going to happen to them in the future. She offered them to him at a high price. He said, "It's too much." So she went away and burned three of them. Then she came back the next day and said, "I have 6 books here. And she offered them for the same price she had asked for the 9. And he said, No, It's too much. She went away and burned three more. Then the next day she came back and offered those three for the same price she had offered them at first, and by this time they had a scarcity value and he bought them. That's the story that the Romans told.

Anyway the time came when Constantine was crowned Emperor by his troops in York, Britain. At the same time another General, Maxentius was in Rome and claimed to be the Roman Emperor. Constantine came with his army down France and across into Italy, and as he approached Rome Maxentius asked the keepers of the Sybilene Books, "what shall I do? Shall I stay behind the walls of Rome and resist all efforts of Constantine to take the city, or shall I march out and meet him in open battle? And the answer the Sybilene Books gave after carefully consulting them was, "If you march out and attack Constantine, the enemy of Rome will perish." Maxentius thought that was wonderful that Constantine being the enemy of Rome would perish. So he marched out and fought against Constantine. If you're ever in Rome and ever go to the Vatican galleries you'll find one Room that has all around its sides great paintings of Constantine's life and one of them shows the great Maxentius and the next shows Maxentius falling into the water after he had been mortally wounded. Maxentius was killed in the battle, and thus it was proved that Maxentius was the enemy of Rome, and Constantine was the Emperor. If it had been the other way around the statement would have been equally true.

I give these illustrations simply to alert you to the Biblical positions and see whether they are similar. See whether the predictions could have been said to be true if things had turned out quite differently. We don't mean by that that you can tell from the Biblical predictions exactly what is going to happen. God is not interested in satisfying our curiosity. God wants us to face situations as they come; to solve them in the light of His Word; to follow the principles of His Word and to go forward. But He gives us a certain number of predictions as evidence that He controls History and that He is indeed the Author of history and Creator of the world and we can trust His Bible. So when the event happens we can see how it does actually correspond what to what God had declared in His word.

Last night I spoke about the wonderful prophecy about Babylonia. We noticed how that if that had been made about Palestine it would have been the exact opposite to any situation that has ever been in Palestine up to the present. But in the case of Babylonia where