

empire until c. 400 A.D.: Between 400 and 600 A.D. you have a period when the Roman empire was largely broken into pieces. And when these German tribes were going through and seizing this part and that part and the other part, and at 400 A.D. let us say the probability is that 3/4 of the people of the Roman empire could read and write.

And by 500 A.D. in the western empire at least, I doubt if one person in thirty could read and write. There was -- There was a tremendous decline in every aspect of civilization during those years between 400 and 600 A.D. Then at 600 there came a new force into ~~the~~ the world. A force which its followers believed was a supernatural force! Mohammed declared God had sent him. He declared there is one God and Mohammed is his prophet. He declared that all people should turn and believe in one God and ~~after~~ after preaching this for a number of years and getting perhaps 8 or 10 and being in danger for his life in Mecca. Finally he fled from Mecca and went to Medina and there he started a new system, starting to force people to adopt his view. And building Arab tribes into enthusiasm for his teachings and also for the plunder they were getting. The armies marched out shortly after 600 A.D. and in a very few years most of the eastern empire had been conquered. The new Persian force that had developed had been completely overcome. All of N. Africa had been overrun. Spain had been taken and it looks as if the whole world was going to fall into their hands.

So here is what == something which its believers felt was a supernatural thing, something which seemed about to completely destroy the empires which preceded and which seemed about to grow so as to fill the whole earth.

So you have the obvious view as it would appear to somebody living at c. 750 A.D. if the NT is left out of consideration. But you have here a great difficulty, just as you had with the critic's view. The difficulty is that what appeared to be the case in 750 A.D., no longer appears to be the case today. There was this tremendous spread of Mohammedanism which held the land of Israel for c. 800 years, Jerusalem was in Moslem hands. It spread over a large part of the world and looked as if ~~it~~ it was going to conquer the world, but eventually it became weak and today it would have little hold on the world if it were not for the money it receives from the oil. Today it is a comparatively weak force in the world.

So here is something which might have appeared to be precisely the fulfillment, but which did not work out. There are other interpretations I was hoping to get over today. We will not try to get the conclusion as to the correct ~~interpretation~~ interpretation in ch. 2 but will look forward to further evidence from other sections.

I will post the notices of the next assignment.