

Tyndale Thought for the Day

4th May 2020



A while (a lifetime...) ago many were talking about “superforecasting”. A “superforecaster” is someone who can analyse lots of data and make confident predictions. Horoscopes, fortune tellers, stock market gurus, “pundits” of all kinds – there’s an industry devoted to predicting the future. It’s a major feature in parts of the Church too. Many books and speakers describe, in often lurid detail, the so-called “end times” – the supposed period preceding the end of the world.

They often purport to show how history is predicted accurately in the Bible and read “the signs of the times” to predict the end. Obvious problems with all this – the world just never ends as predicted – don’t seem to dent the enthusiasm of the predictors. Even now some are interpreting this virus as a “sign of the end” – it’s certainly being described by some already as a divine punishment on the sinfulness of humanity.

The fact is, few saw this coming. Except – there’s the rub. A number of experts did warn about the likelihood of a pandemic. Yet often those warnings went unheeded. Governments everywhere were caught napping. Not everywhere – some countries such as New Zealand reacted quickly. It’s ironic that in the heartlands of that “end-times” industry and of superforecasting preparedness was patchy.

As far as the Bible is concerned, two things can be said. First, the words of Jesus remain as seminal as ever, “no one knows the day or the hour”. Second, much of the Bible’s teaching about “the end” (see many of the parables of Jesus) revolves around the need to be prepared...

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