

[1975, In Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible. Merrill C. Tenney, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.]

DESTINY (מני) a pagan god, along with Fortune in Isaiah 65:11, ASV. One may guess that there is some similarity with the Stoic theory of fate, but the fact that the founder of Stoicism, Zeno, was a Semite is insufficient ground of asserting any historical connection.

Pagan ideas of fate or destiny vary. In Gr. Mythology and in some popular forms of Mohammedanism the hour of death is determined, and perhaps the places also, but the ordinary course of life is left to chance. Stoicism, more consistently, insisted that every event was determined. Sometimes fate is supposed to be a blind, purposeless force, rather than providence, foresight, and wise planning. Again, the Stoics, particularly in later times asserted the wisdom and foresight of God.

Though the word “destiny” does not occur in the KJV and the Gr. World does not occur in the NT, the idea, divest of pagan implications, is frequent in the Bible. God sees the end from the beginning. He has appointed a destiny for the Christian, for the unbeliever, for Israel, and for other nations. But instead of the world “destiny,” the Bible speak of providence, predestination, and last things or eschatology (q.v.).

As the Westminster Shorter Catechism says “God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creature, and all their actions.”

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