

gives us important glimpses of it. Prophecy, although it includes foretelling, is, to an even greater extent, forth-telling.

Since the prophetic books deal to so large an extent with situations at the time when the men were writing, they can hardly be understood without considerable knowledge of these situations. For this reason it is good to commence our study of prophetic books with those in which the contemporary situation is sketched rather fully. In this way we get an idea of the methods of the prophets, and learn the principles that are necessary in interpreting those books in which the historical situation is not so fully presented.

The book of Jonah is a good place to begin study of the Minor Prophets, because it has more narrative than any other. Even here we have to learn something of its background from the historical books, but not a great deal.

Although the book is largely narrative, it is full of spiritual significance for God's people. This Jonah is a historical character. He is mentioned in II Kings 14:25, which describes his relation to Jeroboam II, king of Israel, as follows: "He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher."

We see from this verse that Jonah was a very patriotic man, and this helps us to understand his actions. He loved his own people, and did not like to think of helping their