

It is very important in an apologetic sense for the help it gives in establishing the truth of the revealed Scripture. It is also necessary in keeping us posted on the events in life—and helping us organize our lives to meet and deal with these things. But our thrust in these discussions is not to learn more of the future but rather to see what previous revelation of the future (and the subsequent fulfillment) teaches us about our present relationship with God.

### C. Our Passage and Its Background.

The central passage for this study is in Jeremiah 28-31. We shall look at some other portions but this is the key section. It is centered around the prophecies of Jeremiah and the reaction of the people to his work. Hence the background is that of the nation of Judah about 593 BC. Nebuchadnezzar had already defeated the Hebrews, conquered Jerusalem once, and taken King Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The question in the minds of the people related to what the future held for them. Jeremiah tells them that it holds a Babylonian captivity that will continue for nearly 60 years from the date of these chapters. It is not a popular message and is opposed by many other so-called prophets, by the rulers and the masses in general. He gives a number of predictive prophecies so that they will know he speaks truly. But the will of the people is to have their own way. His words then turn to tell them what that will produce and in the framework of this situation our narrative takes place. It offers an ideal setting to study prediction, historic prophecy, fulfillment and the effects of the prophetic ministry on the people of Judah.

A quick analysis of the portion will show us that chapter 28 is largely the conflict of Jeremiah with Hananiah (a pretender); 29; a message to those of the captivity in general; 30, predictions of a coming time of "Jacob's trouble" and what the nation should learn from it, while 31, is a passage of God's sadness for His people and the better end He has in mind for them in a day to come.