

4. Perspective: This is a matter of how the prophet arranges his material. It is complicated by these facts:
  - not all prophecies deal with the same subject to the same degree
  - a prophet may concentrate on one aspect and not mention the related concepts to the prophecy.
  - the stress on one phase of the subject may seem extreme and minimize others.

I will try to illustrate this on the overhead although the illustrations of TWT are sometimes harder to figure out than was the original material.
5. Condition: There may be conditions cited with a prophecy or there may be conditions implied. Generally whenever a prophecy of judgment is given there is the implicit condition that repentance may relieve the prediction...as in the general prophecy: "The soul that sins shall die"...which is ominous indeed without the concept of forgiveness through repentance and restoration. In the matter of condition there are two or three peculiarities to be observed:
  - condition of circumstance: somewhat as mentioned above
  - and condition of time: we will look at both of these against the background of the book of Jonah...and we will do it briefly.
6. Future terminology: it is not easy to discuss what is unknown and foreign in terms that are commonplace and simple. This is one of the difficulties in the book of Revelation.
7. Comprehension: To what degree must we understand what is given? How much the initial communicators understood? How full a picture the prophecy intends to give us of the total situation?

I feel a little guilty to bother you with this sort of detail. It is rather academic and not very edifying in itself. But it is part of that necessary knowledge which gives the student a portion of background material to bring to the study of any passage. Without it one cannot go far. Much of it, we might suggest, is learned by good ol' common sense...consequently I have known some wonderful students of the Bible who could not have articulated any of these but actually recognized them and used them because they approached the whole matter sensibly.

#### C. What are the Tools that Will Help us in These Areas

Some more academic stuff but of a practical sort that will help in the study of all Biblical passages...not just the prophetic types.

1. Thoroughly understanding the context...both near and far. All truth (or teaching of any sort) originates in a context and if the context is understood the message is better put into proper proportion. I will illustrate it with a "fly story" from the catalogue of my grandfather's experiences and stories.