

A. A. MacRae

the historical background of the prophetic messages is important for their interpretation, but it is not necessary, in order properly to understand these messages, to have additional knowledge beyond what can be safely gathered from the statements in the Word of God itself. All the principles necessary for correct interpretation of prophecy can be found in the Bible. To ascertain them may require a great deal of careful study. External material can be helpful, but is not essential for understanding the divine message. Knowledge gained from study of other ancient writings or from archaeological material may throw light on certain events or on certain aspects of interpretation, but the correct understanding of the messages that God has placed here for His people through the ages can be correctly and completely gathered from the Bible as it stands. This recognition of the divine preparation is a necessary prerequisite to proper interpretation of the prophetic books.

B. The Purposes of Prophecy.

1. Rebuke. On examining the prophetic declarations contained in the historical books