

## Lessons From The Prophets

By: Justin Witt

Recently I have been reading through some of the prophets (Isaiah – Ezekiel). It amazes me how much Israel and Judah had been told about the captivity that would come upon them. They were not left much to the imagination after all the prophets had spoken.

We certainly don't seem to see the same thing from Jonah and Nineveh. All we see from Jonah about the destruction that awaited Nineveh is in Jonah 3:4.

**Jonah 3:4** *"he cried out and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."*

So why do we see so many details about the destruction and captivity that was in store for Israel and Judah? I would say that the first reason would be to evoke repentance from them (**Ezekiel 18:30-32**). Just as we saw from Nineveh, they repented and God did not destroy them as Jonah said He would. Certainly we can see the same attitude in the New Testament as well.

**1 Timothy 2:4** shows us that it is God's will that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth

**Luke 9:56** Jesus said that he did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.

Surely this will of God is not new to us, but has been His will since the beginning. Israel was told so many things so often to provoke them to turn from their evil ways and to turn toward God (**Ezekiel 20:5-25**).

I think there is a second reason for all that they were told. It would serve as a grand reminder for the remnant that God would leave for Himself. This remnant that would have an understanding of these things that took place would be able to see the warnings that the prophets had given and would understand the importance of listening to God and turning from sin in their lives.

To this day, all that seek to follow God can read these prophecies and can read of some of the actual events that took place and can know for a fact that God does what He says. We can understand the seriousness of their sin. And now we can ask ourselves the question, does He consider our sin any less serious? I would say, if anything, He would consider our sin more serious given we can understand more than they did. Jesus, our Lord and Savior, has come into this world and those that sin make His great sacrifice of no value in their lives.

Throughout the scriptures we can learn a great deal about the judgment that awaits us all (**John 15:1-11**). We can also learn about the love that has been shown to us (**John 15:12-13**). We can also learn about the condemnation that awaits those that will not abide in Jesus (**2**

**Thessalonians 1:8-9**). There was a certain rich man in **Luke 16:19-31** that did not abide in the love of God. He showed no mercy to others even though he had a great abundance. He ended up in Hades. After finding no relief, he begged that his brothers would be told what was coming. If he had it all to do over again, I think we would have seen repentance from this rich man.

The real question that we all must ask ourselves is, will you repent at the hearing of all of these things as God desires, or do you want to serve as the example of God's justice and wrath?