

LENT DEVOTIONAL APRIL 4, 2017

Minh Towner '13, Chaplain, Novant Health Prince William Hospital, Va.

SCRIPTURE

JEREMIAH 25:8-17

8 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words, 9 I am going to send for all the tribes of the north, says the LORD, even for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these nations around; I will utterly destroy them, and make them an object of horror and of hissing, and an everlasting disgrace. 10 And I will banish from them the sound of mirth and the sound of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. 11 This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste. 13 I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. 14 For many nations and great kings shall make slaves of them also; and I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands. 15 For thus the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. 16 They shall drink and stagger and go out of their minds because of the sword that I am sending among them. 17 So I took the cup from the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it.

DEVOTIONAL

I spend a lot of time on the road visiting people and churches, so getting from point A to point B is the ultimate goal of my trip. GPS is my companion, my best friend forever (BFF). But after driving the same route over the years, my self-confidence improved, and I started taking shortcuts and ignoring my GPS. I kept hearing "Recalculating, recalculating" each time I took a different turn from what my GPS thought was correct. So I had a solution: I didn't tune it out, I just turned it off. But one day I found myself really, really lost in the middle of nowhere—certainly not where I wanted to be and nowhere that I recognized. Fear slowly took over my body and, as fast as I could, I reached for my GPS. My hands were shaking; my heart was racing. At that moment, I realized the consequence of my "disobedience" in not following the instructions of my GPS. I also realized my disobedience to God by my excessive self-reliance and by not listening to God's voice, God's "GPS" instructions.

We are just like the people of Judah in today's reading. They were disobedient to the point that God's wrath was inevitable. Verse 12, however, states that God's wrath would not last forever. The Cross and the death of Jesus Christ, God's only Son, demonstrates His deepest love for us and His desire to be in relationship with us.

So where are you now? Are you lost? Is your GPS turned on, or off? God wants us be in communication with Him, to find our way home to Him. Are we willing?

PRAYER

Oh God, you are a God of mercy and love even when we are so disobedient to you; even in the depth of your anger, you still love us. Your love is beyond measure. We ask you for forgiveness. Help us to have the ears to hear you, a heart to love you, and a zeal and joy to follow your will and not ours. Renew our minds so we can see and hear through the eyes of Jesus, not our own. Amen.

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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610



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