

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 1, 2016

The Rev. Dr. John Welch '02, Vice President for Student Services and Community Engagement and Dean of Students

SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 2:5-22

- 5 O house of Jacob,
 come, let us walk
 in the light of the LORD!
- 6 For you have forsaken the ways of your people,
 O house of Jacob.
Indeed they are full of diviners from the east
 and of soothsayers like the Philistines,
 and they clasp hands with foreigners.
- 7 Their land is filled with silver and gold,
 and there is no end to their treasures;
their land is filled with horses,
 and there is no end to their chariots.
- 8 Their land is filled with idols;
 they bow down to the work of their hands,
 to what their own fingers have made.
- 9 And so people are humbled,
 and everyone is brought low —
 do not forgive them!
- 10 Enter into the rock,
 and hide in the dust
from the terror of the LORD,
 and from the glory of his majesty.
- 11 The haughty eyes of people shall be brought low,
 and the pride of everyone shall be humbled;
and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.
- 12 For the LORD of hosts has a day
 against all that is proud and lofty,
 against all that is lifted up and high;
- 13 against all the cedars of Lebanon,
 lofty and lifted up;
 and against all the oaks of Bashan;
- 14 against all the high mountains,
 and against all the lofty hills;
- 15 against every high tower,
 and against every fortified wall;
- 16 against all the ships of Tarshish,
 and against all the beautiful craft.

17 The haughtiness of people shall be humbled,
and the pride of everyone shall be brought low;
and the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.
18 The idols shall utterly pass away.
19 Enter the caves of the rocks
and the holes of the ground,
from the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.
20 On that day people will throw away
to the moles and to the bats
their idols of silver and their idols of gold,
which they made for themselves to worship,
21 to enter the caverns of the rocks
and the clefts in the crags,
from the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.
22 Turn away from mortals,
who have only breath in their nostrils,
for of what account are they?

DEVOTIONAL

“You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years
And get pats on the back as you pass
But your final reward will be heartache and tears
If you’ve cheated the man in the glass.”

These words are an excerpt from Peter Wimbrow’s 1934 poem “The Man in the Glass.” It’s by God’s mercy that blind judgment is not dispensed, for God reveals the wrongs upon which judgment is warranted. Clearly, the ostentatious, self-indulging behavior of Judah provoked God, for this behavior evidenced the distortion of the image in which humankind was created. If we overlaid on our nation these allegations, leveled against Judah, what would be the result? We are also rich and prideful, yet the poor and marginalized are also victimized more than ever in our nation’s history. When we look in the mirror, we should see the bloodstained image of Christ who came into a world suffering from the sin fruit of injustice. His image should challenge our self-made images.

PRAYER

Lord God, the well waters of poverty are rising around us while a select few sit on the perimeters with full water buckets in their hands, poised to add to the misery of others. Grant relief to the suffering and the hearts of those inflicting pain. Remind us all of why it was that You came. Amen.

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