

Lenten Devotional March 31, 2021

Scripture

Jeremiah 17:5-10, 14-18

5 Thus says the LORD: Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the LORD. 6 They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes. They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. 7 Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. 8 They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. 9 The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse—who can understand it? 10 I the LORD test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings. . . . 14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for you are my praise. 15 See how they say to me, “Where is the word of the LORD? Let it come!” 16 But I have not run away from being a shepherd in your service, nor have I desired the fatal day. You know what came from my lips; it was before your face. 17 Do not become a terror to me; you are my refuge on the day of disaster; 18 Let my persecutors be shamed, but do not let me be shamed; let them be dismayed, but do not let me be dismayed; bring on them the day of disaster; destroy them with double destruction!

Devotional

The Rev. Alice Phillips '94

I love plants and flowers; however, I have a problem! In the busyness of life, I can walk right past them and forget something . . . they need to be watered.

What is true for my flowers and plants is true for my spiritual life as well. This passage from Jeremiah gives us a wonderful image of a tree planted by a stream whose root system reaches deep to be nourished by the water (vv. 7-8). These verses tell us that, when we trust in the Lord, this is the image for us. When we trust in the Lord, we are nourished and strengthened, and we can bear fruit. When the tough times come in life, we can stand strong.

We do not need to be like my dried up flowers and plants when I forget to water them. Jesus tells us, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them” (John 7:37-38).

Are you spiritually parched right now? Why not come to the One who can nourish your wilted spirit. Soak in God’s Word, spend time in prayer and meditation, and take time to praise the Lord!

Prayer

Gracious and Loving God, we thank you for the way in which you nourish our spiritual lives. You invite us to come and drink. Oh Lord, we have to admit that there are times in our busyness that we don’t spend ample time with you; and we know the result: a wilted spirit. We are grateful, Lord, that as we come to Jesus and drink, you lift us up and strengthen us! Help us to drink abundantly so that, when the difficult times in life come, we can stand strong and continue to bear fruit.