

## Lent Devotional March 14, 2019

### SCRIPTURE

#### Deuteronomy 9:23-10:5

<sup>9:23</sup> And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, “Go up and occupy the land that I have given you,” you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God, neither trusting him nor obeying him. <sup>24</sup> You have been rebellious against the LORD as long as he has known you. <sup>25</sup> Throughout the forty days and forty nights that I lay prostrate before the LORD when the LORD intended to destroy you, <sup>26</sup> I prayed to the LORD and said, “Lord GOD, do not destroy the people who are your very own possession, whom you redeemed in your greatness, whom you brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. <sup>27</sup>

Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; pay no attention to the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness and their sin, <sup>28</sup> otherwise the land from which you have brought us might say, ‘Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land that he promised them, and because he hated them, he has brought them out to let them die in the wilderness.’ <sup>29</sup> For they are the people of your very own possession, whom you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm.”

<sup>10:1</sup> At that time the LORD said to me, “Carve out two tablets of stone like the former ones, and come up to me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood. <sup>2</sup> I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets, which you smashed, and you shall put them in the ark.” <sup>3</sup> So I made an ark of acacia wood, cut two tablets of stone like the former ones, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. <sup>4</sup> Then he wrote on the tablets the same words as before, the ten commandments that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the fire on the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me. <sup>5</sup> So I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark that I had made; and there they are, as the LORD commanded me.

### DEVOTIONAL

**The Rev. David Schell, M.Div. '18 / Pastor, Fairplain Presbyterian Church, Benton Harbor, Mich.**

Carve. Come. Make.

Moses spent 40 days and nights on Mt. Horeb pleading with God not to destroy Israel, and the first words credited to God are three actions: Carve, Come, and Make.

*Carve* the tablets.

*Come* to the mountain.

*Make* an ark of wood.

Moses' first required action was not to come to God, but to *prepare* to come to God. Do the hard hammer work of carving out a space to receive God's word. *Carve* this chunk of stone into something suitable for receiving what God had to say.

Then, once he was prepared, Moses was to *Come* to the mountain. Come and hear the words of God, who says, “I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets.”

Finally, *Make*. After carving a space for God's word, and coming to God to receive it, Moses is to *Make* a space for God's word—a physical space where God's word will be kept and honored and, hopefully, obeyed.

How often do we casually flip open our Bibles without having done the work in advance to carve our hearts of stone into the kind of surface onto which God can speak God's word? How often do we fail to

come to hear God's word at all? And how often do we climb down from the mountain and deposit the word God has spoken to us in any old place, rather than in a specially made place of privilege in our hearts to be honored and obeyed?

**PRAYER**

God who still speaks, remind us to listen. Remind us to prepare our hearts to hear, as Moses prepared the tablets. Remind us to come in eagerness to hear the word you speak. And help us to keep that word close in our hearts—and by your loving power obey it.