

LENT DEVOTIONAL MARCH 9, 2017

The Rev. Anthony Rivera, Director of Admissions, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

SCRIPTURE

DEUTERONOMY 9:23-10:5

9:23 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. 24 You have been rebellious against the LORD as long as he has known you. 25 Throughout the forty days and forty nights that I lay prostrate before the LORD when the LORD intended to destroy you, 26 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. 27 Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; pay no attention to the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness and their sin, 28 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.’ 29 For they are the people of your very own possession, whom you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm.”

10:1 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. 2 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.” 3 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. 4 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. 5 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

Reflection—a word that best describes today’s passage. Moses reminds Israel of the reason their fathers failed to enter the Promised Land.

In God’s interaction with the Israelites after leaving Egypt, it is grace that overshadows all God did for them. Guidance, safety, provision, care . . . the Triune God self-revealed to a people who, in turn, complained, rebelled, and simply did not believe in Him—so much so that their unbelief prevented them from entering the land “flowing with milk and honey.”

As we observe this season of Lent, let us examine our hearts and ask whether, as with the Israelites, unbelief characterizes how we look and interact with God. Unbelief prevents us from seeing the awesomeness of God at work and keeps us from living a life worthy of His calling. To serve God in a state of unbelief is a contradiction. God is trustworthy!

PRAYER

Gracious God, as we ponder on today’s reading, forgive us for those moments in which we did not trust you, did not believe you. Help us to take you at your word in the knowledge that you are faithful and eternally trustworthy. God, we turn our hearts to you today. Amen.

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Deuteronomy 9:23-10:5

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



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