

From Pastor Don

For this Christmas, the Consistory (the Commission Elders and the Board of Deacons) gave me a lot of gift options. I chose a special artist's proof of He Qi's *Moses Striking the Rock*. This image struck my fancy. I heard later that some on the Consistory were curious why I would pick that image from all the others. As I reflected on the reason, I thought it would be interesting to share this with everyone.

As most of you know, He Qi interprets scenes from the Bible using images that are evocative of decidedly Asian – specifically, Chinese culture and sensibilities. I have used He Qi's art numerous times for the sermon title slide each week in our services of worship. With the approval of the Worship and Nurture Committee I bought the digital rights to use many of He Qi's images in our services. I learned long ago that the images of our faith have been held captive by European artistic expressions

for so long that many people automatically think of Jesus as blond and blue eyed. Some people even think that Moses looks like Charlton Heston! I like this particular image of Moses, dressed in ceremonial costume with the green flags at his back and the crown on his head. It is a brilliant way to recast a biblical character into another cultural expression. The importance of his role and his standing as the leader of his people are on full display without the use of a single word to name him, instead, using the visual symbols from an Asian milieu.

I love the OT. Anyone in the School of Discipleship can tell you that the Old Testament is alive and full of meaning, and speaks about the same God that Jesus called "Abba." I also love the story of the Exodus. It is a central theme to our Christian faith. It has tremendous meaning for all of us. The story of God delivering the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and then working through Moses, Aaron and

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