

*Daily Morning Message*  
*St Paul United Church of Christ*  
*5312 Old Blue Rock Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45247*  
*Allen M Fluent, Pastor*  
*Monday, August 23, 2021*

*Lectionary Readings*

*Psalm 84*  
*Nehemiah 9:1-15*  
*Ephesians 6:10-20*

*Today's Scripture Verse:*

*You came down also upon Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and you made known your holy sabbath to them and gave them commandments and statutes and a law through your servant Moses. (Nehemiah 6:13-14)*

What it means:

The conquest of Israel and Judah, which took place between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, led to many people being exiled from the land. This is commonly called the "Babylonian captivity." Beginning in 538 BC, under the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, the exiles began to be sent home. As they arrived, there was a need for physically rebuilding the nation, and after that a need to re-establish the faith and traditions of the people. The passage from the Book of Nehemiah is a prayer offered in a service of repentance and recommitment that reaffirms the people's covenant with God.

Our time of reflection:

Covenant ceremonies are described several times in the Hebrew Scriptures. They are held at times of transition, when it becomes important to remember who we are and what we stand for. In our own time of rapid change, it may be especially important that we also learn to recite the stories of our relationship with God.

