

MOSES

Walnut

EXODUS 32:19

...Moses' anger blazed. He threw down the tablets he was holding and broke them at the foot of the mountain.



The piece of walnut used for this sculpture was saved for me, from a walnut tree that had been cut down on my wife's family farm in Georgia. The log had been stored in the barn for a couple of years, so it had aged slowly and didn't show too many cracks.

When I tried to shape it, from a log into a more manageable size, I started band-sawing some of the excess wood. In doing so I hit a nail that had been embedded, completely hidden, in the log. The iron from the nail darkened the wood surrounding it but I decided to leave it in, as it seems to lend character to the piece.

Shortly after I started on this piece, I learned that a professional woodcarver lived in my town. I thought it would be great if he would take me as a student. I went to see him and he said he didn't have time to teach, but he took time to show me his studio and some of the pieces he was working on. It was very impressive.

He asked me what I had done and I showed him some pictures. Based on that, he realized I was serious, so he offered to let me bring my work to his studio and work on it there, so I brought my Moses there. He wouldn't teach but said that if I had any questions he would try to answer or show me.

He is a fine gentleman, Michael Gressel, and at the age of 94 he still works in his studio three hours a day. We keep in touch and exchange photos of our latest pieces. He still critiques my work, which I appreciate because he is truly a master wood sculptor.