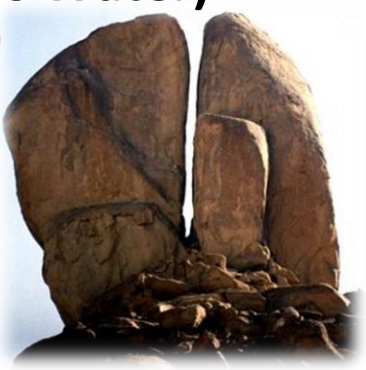
Jesus Christ in the Old Testament

(Part 11 – Jesus, The ROCK Who Provides Water)

(Exodus 17:1-7; Numbers 20:1-13; 1 Corinthians 10:4)

4/12/2015



Read Exodus 17:1-7

In the Bible, Jesus Christ is continually likened unto a Rock.
--He is called a stone of stumbling and Rock of offense.
--He is called a chief cornerstone
--He is called a foundation (stone) upon which the Church is built.

Matthew 16:18 - "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it"

See: I Corinthians 10:1-4

1 Corinthians 10:4 - "and all (Israel) drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ (Messiah).."

1. **Christ was the Supplying ROCK**
   (Jesus is among us, providing the needs of His people)
   "and all (Israel) drank..." (1 Cor. 10:4a)

2. **Christ was the Spiritual ROCK**
   (Jesus is among us, working in the invisible realm with His people)
   "they were drinking from a spiritual rock" (1 Cor. 10:4b)

3. **Christ was the Sojourning ROCK**
   (Jesus is among us, traveling with His people)
   "...Rock which followed (accompanied) them..." (1 Cor.10:4c)

Jesus said that Moses "wrote about Me" (Jn. 5:46).
Here is another example!

I. **Moses was told to "<u>Strike the ROCK</u>"** and Christ would provide Life-giving Water (Exodus 17:1-7; *v.6)
17:6
"I will stand. . . on the Rock" - Invisibly Christ would (in pre-incarnate form) stand on the Rock in Horeb

Note: If Yahweh could stand on a Rock, why would it seem so incredulous that He could also stand on the earth in the person of Jesus Christ? Again, such expressions allow a sort of Theology 101 for Israel to accept the incarnation of Christ.

II. **Moses was told to "<u>Speak to the ROCK</u>"** and Christ would provide Life-giving Water (Numbers 20:1-13)

1) At Marah, where the waters were bitter and undrinkable (SEE: Exod. 15:22-25).
2) At Rephidim where the Rock was smitten
3) At Kadesh (on the edge of the Promised land) (SEE Numbers 20:1-13)

There are two primary references to the Rock and its provision of water:

At Rephidim Moses was told to <u>smite</u> the Rock; and at Kadesh, he was told to <u>speak</u> to the Rock.

1) At Christ's first coming, He was <u>smitten</u> to provide our redemption.

2) At Christ's second coming, He will be <u>summoned</u> (spoken to with tears of repentance).
SEE: Zech. 12:10;
SEE: Zech. 13:6-9

Zech. 13:7 - "<u>Strike</u> the Shepherd'
Zech. 13:9 - "They will <u>call</u> on My name"

Conclusion:

Jesus is the source of living water!

Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. *Revelation 21:6*

Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, *Revelation 22:1*

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. *Revelation 22:17*

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--He is called a stone of _____ and _____.
--He is called a chief _____
--He is called a _____ (stone) upon which the Church is built.

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1 Corinthians 10:4 - "and all (Israel) drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ (Messiah).."

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There are two primary references to the Rock and its provision of water:

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Introduction: **Read Exodus 17:1-7**

In the Bible, Jesus Christ is continually likened unto a Rock.

--He is called a stone of stumbling and Rock of offense.

--He is called a chief cornerstone

> *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*
> *Isaiah 28:16 (cp. I Pet. 2:8)*

--He is called a foundation (stone) upon which the Church is built.

--Hymn: "The Lord's our rock, in Him we hide; a shelter in the time of storm.

--Now He is called the "Rock which followed (accompanied) them."

Mt. 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

I Corinthians 10:1-4

1 Cor. 10:1 - "Under the cloud" - This supernatural cloud both guided and protected the nation of Israel as they made their exodus from Egypt.

It guided them by day as it took the form of a giant pillar and by night as a pillar of fire (which illuminated their path). SEE: Exodus 13:21-22.

It protected them from their pursuers as it produced a thick, foggy darkness, making it impossible for the Egyptians to know where they were going; and it protected them by providing light for their night journey (SEE: Exod. 14:19-20).
(v. 2)

"Baptized unto Moses" - i.e. they were fully identified with Moses as their leader as they were immersed, as it were, in the midst of the cloud and in the midst of the Red Sea which parted for them [Note: Baptism is believers' way of showing whom he identifies with; we identify with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and specifically with the salvation provided for us in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.]

Israel had the privilege of being led by the greatest human leader to ever live!

1 Corinthians 10:4 - "And (Israel) did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

1. Christ was the <u>Supplying</u> ROCK
(Jesus is among us, <u>providing</u> the needs of His people)

"They did all <u>drink</u>..." (1 Cor. 10:4a)

2. Christ was the <u>Spiritual</u> ROCK
(Jesus is among us, working in the invisible realm with His people)

"They drank of that <u>Spiritual</u> Rock" (1 Cor. 10:4b)

V. 3
"Spiritual meat" - Food produced by a supernatural or spiritual agent. The manna was literal food but owes its origin not to natural causes but to spiritual. It was delicious, honey-flavored, light, white wafers manufactured in Heaven (Exod. 16:4, 31)
v.4
"Spiritual drink" - Again, literal water, which came not from natural rivers, reservoirs, or springs, but from the invisible yet real and powerful pre-incarnate Person of Jesus Christ.

3. Christ was the <u>Sojourning</u> ROCK
(Jesus is among us, <u>traveling</u> with His people)

Numbers 33 provides a detailed list of all the places the Israelites camped at. The Lord was with them at each location raining manna and providing water throughout.

"...Rock that <u>followed</u> (accompanied) them..." (1 Cor.10:4c)

The Israelites had asked the question: **"Is the LORD among us, or not?" (Exod. 17:7)**

Yes He is among us! He was among them, yet they so often forgot.

"The Angel (Messenger) of God" led Israel through the Red Sea (and was in the cloudy pillar by day and pillar of fire by night.

V. 4
"The rock was Christ" = Proof of Christ's pre-existence (cp. Jn. 8:58).

Everywhere they went, Jesus Christ went and gave them water for their parched tongues in the midst of a waterless desert (Exod. 17:1-9; Num. 20:1-13).

Jesus said that Moses "wrote of Me" (Jn. 5:46).

Here is another example!

I. **Moses was told to "<u>Strike the ROCK</u>"** and Christ would provide Life-giving Water (Exodus 17:1-7; *v.6)

Most of the area west and east of the eastern arm of the Red Sea is rock! A dry, barren wasteland. Rock everywhere! Outside of building material when cut by a skilled mason, rocks are of little or no value. They grow nothing. They certainly provide no food or water. It's impossible to produce water from a rock. But God specializes in the impossible. He likes to take a situation that seems impossible and do His greatest work.

Exodus 17:1 - It was very evident that Yahweh was leading His people day by day (as a cloudy Pillar by day and a blazing column of Fire by night). Moses did not make a move apart from the movement of the Shekinah Glory cloud.

It was "according to the commandment of God" (v. 1) that they now sojourned to Rephedim. There was one problem in Rephidim. "There was no water" there.

Two million people need a lot of water (especially in a dry, hot desert. The average person needs 8 glasses of water per day: roughly half your body weight in ounces. So a person weighing 200 lbs should drink 100 oz. of water per day to be adequately hydrated. Considering the increased demands for hydration in the desert, this would increase.

If the people of Israel only consumed 80 oz. of water per day, this would equate to 160 million ounces per day (or 1.25 million gallons of water per day!) That's a lot of liquid!

17:1
If the Lord knew there was no water in Rephidim, why would He lead His people there? It's because God does His greatest works in situations where He is most needed.

In times of abundance, we often forget our need for God. We have everything (so we think) and we don't recognize our dependence on God.

Often in times of plenty we become:

1) Self-sufficient (independent) ("rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing")
2) Prayerless
3) Forgetful of God

God does not lead us to Rephidim because He hates us or is necessarily angry with us, but that He might do His most evident wonders there!

Perhaps this is why some people are experiencing. . .

1) Some great trial (perhaps the loss of health or a loved one)
2) A hardship (maybe a wayward son or daughter)
3) Lean times financially (loss of job etc.)
4) Loneliness (single; you will find that God is your closest companion and best friend)

God, then, allowed occasions of need to bring us to Himself so that we would depend on Him, pray to Him, and see His power, wisdom and glory.

17:2
During such times of difficulty and drought, we are prone to do what Israel did.

Chide with God's people (especially the leadership) and blame them. "Why did you do this to us?" "Why did you lead us to this place?"

Such response really is an indirect attack against God. Why "do ye tempt the Lord?" (v. 2b)

17:3
Instead of murmuring against Moses, what should the Israelites have done? They should have been on their knees. They should have sought God.

17:5
"Take with thee of the elders" - These elders would serve as witnesses to what was about to happen.

Moses is to take the same rod with which he smote the Nile River in Egypt, turning those waters into blood, and now he is to smite the Rock (splitting it open) to produce life-giving water. So Christ also would be smitten with a rod, opening His flesh, then crucified and pierced (producing water and blood flowing out of His body). Why? So that we could all "drink of the water life freely!" (Rev. 22:17)

17:6
"I will stand. . . upon the Rock" - Invisibly Christ would (in pre-incarnate form) stand on the Rock in Horeb

Note: If Yahweh could stand on a Rock, why would it seem so incredulous that He could also stand on the earth in the person of Jesus Christ? Again, such expressions allow a sort of Theology 101 for Israel to accept the incarnation of Christ.

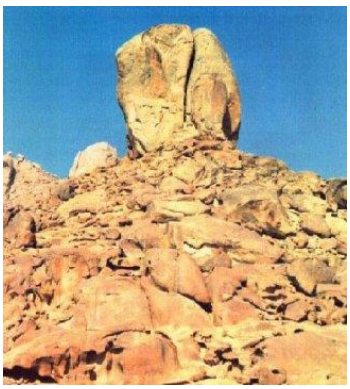
"Upon the Rock" - a particular, prominent rock

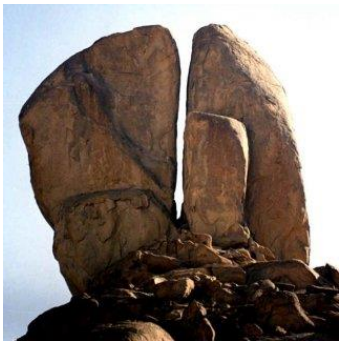
“Now, on the backside of Mount Sinai, there is a very peculiar looking rock, 60 feet tall that is split down the middle. When closely examined, one can see that the base and the surrounding area has the appearance of water erosion. From the cleft in the rock and downhill, the sediment is washed away and the rocks are very smooth. Is this not what is recorded for us in the Scriptures?” (Online Article: The Red Sea Crossing By Noel Chartier)

"He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers … he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed" (Psalm 78:15-16, 20).

"And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out" (Isaiah 48:21).

"He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river" (Psalm 105:41).







"In Horeb" - the name for the region of which Mt. Sinai is the peak. (c. Exod. 3:1f; Dt. 5:2); the place where the Law was received.

Observation: Christ would be smitten at Calvary, and the just demands of the Law would be satisfied, so that we could drink the waters of life!

II. **Moses was told to "<u>Speak to the ROCK</u>"** and Christ would provide Life-giving Water (Numbers 20:1-13)

Although Jesus would provide water at many locations during the 40-year wilderness wanderings, only a few places are mentioned as prominent.

1) At Marah, where the waters were bitter and undrinkable (SEE: Exod. 15:22-25). Of all things, why was a particular tree thrown into the waters to make them drinkable? Why a tree? Why not throw a rock in; or something that belonged to Moses or the people? Why a tree? I believe because there would one day be a particular tree upon which the Son of God would taste the bitterness of sin and suffering for you and me so that we could enjoy the sweetness of the water of life!

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.
1 Peter 2:24

2) At Rephidim where the Rock was smitten

And

3) At Kadesh (on the edge of the Promised land)
(SEE Numbers 20:1-13)

"In Psalm 95:8 the two names Massah (testing) and Meribah (strife) are linked, as examples of Israel's lack of faith and rejection of God: This may be parallelism and not identification, referring to two distinct happenings" (Exodus, R. Alan Cole, p. 134).

Excursus:
The Heated Pressures That Provoked Moses to Sin (v. 1-5)
What hot pressures did Moses face?

1. A long time in the desert (v. 1)
   Moses is now 120 years old. The wilderness and responsibility no doubt took its "toll" on him.
2. His sister's death (v. 1)
3. Absence of water (v. 2)
4. Collective opposition (v. 2)
5. Verbal strife (v. 3)
   a. Complaint (v. 3b)
   b. Interrogation (v. 4)
      Moses' motives are questioned.
   c. Unjust blame (v. 5)
      Moses is credited (blamed) for a work he did not do. It was God, not Moses, who led Israel out into the wilderness. And it was their parent's unbelief at Kadesh which caused them to wander for 40 years.

The leaders, Moses and Aaron, did what all of God's leaders should do in times of pressure and need -- they entered God's presence and sought divine answers.

The Haughty Presumption That Produced Moses' Sin (v. 7-11)
Note: The basis for Moses' act of sin was a moment of unbelief (mistrust) - v. 12)
Great leaders with moments of unbelief: Elijah; John the Baptist.

Faith always results in obedience, and unbelief always result in disobedience.

1. Sinful attitudes (v. 10)
   a. Impatience - "Hear now"
   b. Anger - "Ye rebels"
      SEE: Moses' "rash words" in Psalm 106:32-33

      "They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips."

   c. Pride (self-exaltation) - "Must we fetch you water?"
      It was not Moses and Aaron, but God who "split the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them abundant drink like the ocean depths. He brought forth streams also from the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers" (Ps. 78:15-16).

      We had better never take credit for that work which only God does!

2. Sinful action (v. 11)

   a. The sin of omission (Moses did not do what he was told to do)

      It is important to note that an omission will eventually pave the way for an addition.

      Because Aaron was Moses' translator (Exod. 4:14-17), Moses was to speak to the rock and Aaron was to repeat his words loud enough for all of the people to hear.

   b. The sin of commission (Moses did what he was not told to do)

      Moses' striking the stone revealed a lack of faith. It had been striking the rock that brought result the last time God provided water for the people (Exod. 17:6). Consequently, this time, rather than obeying God's new directions and "speaking to it," Moses struck it and for good measure he struck it twice.

The High Price That Was Paid for Moses' Sin (v. 12)

Two-fold price:

1. A failure of testimony (v. 12)

   Moses failed despite pragmatic results (v. 8 & 11).

   The end does not justify the means; results do not justify disobedience.

   Moses failed despite the fact that God was still glorified.

   The miracle would have been more impressive if Moses had spoken to the rock, rather than striking it like he did before (Ex. 17:5-6).

2. A forfeit of blessing (v. 12)

   Three views on Deut. 1:37 - "For your sakes" -

   (1) Moses is blaming Israel for his sin (No)
   (2) Moses as leader, had to bear full responsibility for the sins of the people he led (No - cp. Jer. 31:30; Ezek. 18:19-24; Ex. 32:32-33)

   (3) Moses was provoked to wrath and sin "because of them" (Israel) (Yes - Ps. 106:32-33)

   Moses is restricted from entering the Promised Land (Deut. 32:49-52)

   Joshua would lead Israel in. Note: Moses represents the Law and the Law could not bring them into the Promised Land, it would take Joshua to bring them in. Our Joshua (Jesus) brings us into the Promised Land!

There are two primary references to the Rock and its provision of water:

1) At Rephidim Moses was told to smite the Rock; and 2) at Kadesh, he was told to speak to the Rock.

I believe the reason is this: That Rock was representing Christ.

1) At Christ's first coming, He was smitten to provide our redemption.

2) At Christ's second coming, He will be summoned (spoken to with tears of repentance).

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Revelation 21:6

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.
Revelation 22:1 (KJV)

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
Revelation 22:17 (KJV)