

Bible 101

Lesson 30 - Moses Strikes a Rock

Exodus 17, Numbers 20, 1 Corinthians 10

Exodus 17:1-7

CONTEXT: The children of Israel left Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, and watched the Egyptian armies destroyed (chapter 14). They rejoiced at their redemption but soon complained about a lack of water (chapter 15) and food (chapter 16).

1. Why does Moses warn Israel about “tempting God”?
 2. How does God describe Moses’s rod?
 3. What did God tell Moses to do to bring water from the rock?
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Numbers 20:1-5

CONTEXT: Numbers 20 records the conclusion of the forty years of wandering. The congregation arrives in Kadesh (verse 1) where Miriam, the older sister of Moses, dies. They travel from Kadesh to Mount Hor (verse 22) where Aaron dies. According to Numbers 33:38, Aaron died “in the fortieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month.” The account of Moses drawing water from a rock in Exodus 17 happens within 3 months after the exodus. The account in Numbers 20 happens approximately forty years later. At this point, an entire generation of Israelites have perished in the desert.

1. What did the congregation wish had happened to them?
2. What else does this region lack besides water? What promise did Israel accuse Moses of failing to keep?

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Numbers 20:6-9

Compare God's instructions in 20:8 with His instructions in Exodus 17:5-6. What is similar? What is different?

Numbers 20:10-13

1. Read verse 10 carefully. What was Moses's first mistake?
 2. Why do you think God gave Israel water even though Moses struck the rock rather than speak to the rock?
 3. What was the penalty for Moses's error?
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1 Corinthians 10:1-4

1. What important Christian ritual is foreshadowed by the crossing of the Red Sea and the protection by a cloud?
 2. What New Testament truth is foreshadowed by God providing food and water in the wilderness?
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1 Corinthians 10:5-11

What do we learn from Israel's idolatry, their episodes of sexual immorality, their tempting of God, and their complaining? Why did God preserve these accounts in Scripture?