

Jesus BC: The Rock

The last couple of weeks we looked at Daniel and the lions' den and Abraham's mountain sacrifice and how we see in these accounts not just great men of faith and not just God working miraculously, but we see the very life of Jesus foretold thousands of years before his physical arrival in the world.

Our minds must be shaped to seek Jesus in ALL of the scriptures. They are all about Him, they all point to Him, and they are all to lead you to Him. We saw on the road to Emmaus how the 2 men's hearts were set ablaze not as Jesus was physically revealed to them, but as He revealed Himself in the OT scriptures to them.

Martin Luther said *"In the whole of Scripture there is nothing else but Christ, either in plain words or involved words"*

The early disciples know this. It's why they constantly referenced the OT in their writings.

Paul speaking of OT examples said:

1 Corinthians 10:4b (HCSB)

For they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.

Now for us that sounds kind of strange. We know Jesus is our Rock, right? He's the foundation of our faith, the chief cornerstone, a rock. He's unmovable, a rock.....

But Paul shares that they drank from a spiritual rock that was Jesus. He pens this in a letter with no explanation, just included in a list of things the Israelites did then goes on to say how God wasn't pleased with them and how we need to learn from their past and resist temptation.

The fact that Paul mentions such a strange thing with no further explanation leads me to believe that they knew what Paul was referring to because they knew the scriptures! We find this example in Exodus 17.

Exodus 17:1-7 (HCSB)

The entire Israelite community left the Wilderness of Sin, moving from one place to the next according to the Lord's command. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. 2 So the people complained to Moses, "Give us water to drink."

"Why are you complaining to me?" Moses replied to them. "Why are you testing the Lord?"

3 But the people thirsted there for water, and grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you ever bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

4 Then Moses cried out to the Lord, "What should I do with these people? In a little while they will stone me!"

5 The Lord answered Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you. Take the staff you struck the Nile with in your hand and go. 6 I am going to stand there in front of you on the rock at Horeb; when you hit the rock, water will come out of it and the people will drink." Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 He named the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites complained, and because they tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

If you've never heard this passage before, Moses was sent by God to lead the Israelites to freedom from captivity in Egypt. Moses is leading them in the wilderness on this long and difficult journey.

These people complain a lot. God moves miraculously, they are happy. Then they quickly forget the blessings and complain again. It's a vicious cycle that just keeps repeating itself.

Chapter 17 picks up where the people are in trouble. They are traveling through some harsh conditions and they have no water. This man, Moses hears from God. He is the one telling them where to go and when. And they are supposed to be heading to this place flowing with milk and honey....

But they don't even have WATER! That's a basic need. They are in desperate times!

Here are some of the key points in the story that point to Jesus:

1. The Israelites are getting anxious due to the severe water shortage that they think will cause them to die, and they begin complaining about it.
2. Moses asks the people why they are complaining to him. And states that in their complaining to him, they are testing the Lord.
3. The people are about to the point of stoning Moses out of frustration because they think he's displaying poor leadership
4. Moses asks God what to do and God tells him how to handle this intense situation.

5. Moses is told to go before all the people, go out ahead of everyone so they can see him clearly and take the elders that represent the people with him.
6. God says to take before the people, the staff (stick) that he used to strike the Nile.
7. Moses must go to a rock that is at Sinai, the mountain where the covenant between God and his people was made.
8. The rock must be struck with that same stick used to strike the Nile and when he does that, water will flow from the rock to quench the people's thirst
9. The place is names "quarrel" and "test" because the people were asking "*Is the Lord really with us?*"

Some pretty important things happening here....on the surface it can seem like some whiny, ungrateful people that like to complain, question their leader, and test God. But all of these things happened to show us specific things about Jesus' coming days on the earth.

Here's how they relate to Jesus:

1. In Jesus' day, the people were anxious for salvation, although they mostly wanted earthly salvation from the Romans.

This was the expectation of all who knew the scriptures. They knew the Messiah was coming, that He would be victorious and save them from their enemies and rule on the earth. We see this as Jesus rides to town on the donkey. They are pumped that He is here, they shouted "Hosanna!" meaning "Lord, save us now!"

They were anxious to be saved from their situation, like those in Exodus, and when it didn't go the way they wanted, they complained

2. The Jews are always arguing or complaining with Jesus and in one response Jesus equates Himself with the Father.

John 10:22-30 (HCSB)

Then the Festival of Dedication took place in Jerusalem, and it was winter. 23 Jesus was walking in the temple complex in Solomon's Colonnade. 24 Then the Jews surrounded Him and asked, "How long are You going to keep us in suspense? If You are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

25 "I did tell you and you don't believe," Jesus answered them. "The works that I do in My Father's name testify about Me. 26 But you don't believe because you are not My sheep. 27 My sheep hear My voice, I know them, and they follow Me.28 I give them

eternal life, and they will never perish—ever! No one will snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. 30 The Father and I are one.”

3. The religious leaders, on multiple occasions, are ready to kill Jesus as they are frustrated with Him and His leadership style.

One time after He healed a man on the Sabbath:

Mark 3:6 (HCSB)

Immediately the Pharisees went out and started plotting with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

Another time after He taught them the truths of God through parables:

Matthew 26:4 (HCSB)

and they conspired to arrest Jesus in a treacherous way and kill Him.

Then we see them lead the rally calling for His death as they falsely accused Him because they felt threatened by Him:

Luke 23:21 (HCSB)

but they kept shouting, “Crucify! Crucify Him!”

4. Jesus talks to the Father about what He is to do in all things concerning this mission He is on.

Luke 22:42 (HCSB)

“Father, if You are willing, take this cup away from Me—nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done.”

John 6:38 (HCSB)

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

5. Jesus’ crucifixion took place before a great crowd of people, including the religious leaders. God sent Him right out in front of everyone for all to see.

Matthew 27:39-43 (HCSB)

Those who passed by were yelling insults at Him, shaking their heads 40 and saying, “The One who would demolish the sanctuary and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross!” 41 In the same way the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked Him and said, 42 “He saved others, but He cannot save Himself! He is the King of Israel! Let Him come down now from the cross,

and we will believe in Him. 43 He has put His trust in God; let God rescue Him now—if He wants Him! For He said, ‘I am God’s Son.’”

Luke 23:48 (HCSB)

All the crowds that had gathered for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, went home, striking their chests.

6. Jesus’ carries His cross, the “stick” that will be used to strike Him, out before all the people.

John 19:17 (HCSB)

Carrying His own cross, He went out to what is called Skull Place, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

7. A new covenant is initiated by Jesus’ sacrifice and the shedding of His blood.

Luke 22:20 (HCSB)

In the same way He also took the cup after supper and said, “This cup is the new covenant established by My blood; it is shed for you.

Hebrews 8:8 (HCSB)

But finding fault with His people, He says:
Look, the days are coming, says the Lord,
when I will make a new covenant
with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah—

8. Jesus calls for all who thirst to come to Him and drink.

John 7:37 (HCSB)

On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, he should come to Me and drink!

John 19:34 (HCSB)

But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

When Jesus was struck by the events at the cross, it resulted with blood and water pouring forth, allowing all people to have their thirst quenched forever

John 4:14 (HCSB)

But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again—ever! In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up within him for eternal life.”

John 6:35 (HCSB)

“I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to Me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Me will ever be thirsty again.

9. The site of the crucifixion was a place where people gathered asking a familiar question: *“Is the Lord really with us?”*

Some are asking it jokingly or sarcastically, saying if He were really God shouldn't He be able to save Himself?

Others are asking it because in spite of the miracles they have seen and the words that have been spoken about what is to come, their right here and now causes them to worry and forget the blessings and promises.

They are desperate for a Savior, desperate for this thirst to be quenched, and as it's being done, as God is working they ask “is God really with us?”

Do you ever question “Is God really with us?”

People are desperate for their thirst to be quenched. And desperate people do desperate things.

The Israelites with Moses were desperate for water. Their desperation about led them to kill the very person God sent to save them, Moses. They fear that God has left them. But God again comes through and miraculously provides what they need.

In Jesus' story, we see the need of all of mankind.....desperate for the intervention of the miracle working, supernatural God. They are thirsty, but not for water to drink but water to sustain their spirit in the wilderness. While they don't see it.....God came through and miraculously provided!

Jesus was struck by the events of the cross for our sins and when His blood flowed out, it cleansed us completely. But water also flowed out offering the end of that thirst. This is a water that only Jesus can provide. We have unending access to this water that will never dry up!

Do you access this river of living water?

Back in Numbers chapter 20, there is a very familiar story. It's almost identical to the Exodus story we read. The people are thirsty, express their desperation, complain to Moses, Moses goes to the Lord, God tells him what to do, Moses goes before the people to a rock, strikes it

and water comes forth, the place is named “test” because the people struggled with the Lord there.

There was one big difference this time.....

Numbers 20:7-8 (HCSB)

The Lord spoke to Moses, 8 “Take the staff and assemble the community. You and your brother Aaron are to speak to the rock while they watch, and it will yield its water. You will bring out water for them from the rock and provide drink for the community and their livestock.”

Did you see it? SPEAK to the rock! As Moses finds himself in a familiar place, the same people, facing death, desperate for water, and while he talks to God, he didn’t listen to God. He thought he knew what to do already. He struck the rock when he was to speak to the rock. And God still provided water for His people, but Moses was punished, not allowed to enter the promised land.

I’ve always read that and kinda felt bad for Moses. I know he didn’t listen but doesn’t the punishment seem kinda harsh?

But this story isn’t about Moses....it’s about Jesus.

Romans 6:10 (HCSB)

For in light of the fact that He died, He died to sin once for all; but in light of the fact that He lives, He lives to God.

Hebrews 7:26-27 (HCSB)

For this is the kind of high priest we need: holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 27 He doesn’t need to offer sacrifices every day, as high priests do—first for their own sins, then for those of the people. He did this once for all when He offered Himself.

Jesus was struck on the cross for the sin of all and the living water was released. There will never be a time where He will be struck again.

Jesus is the Rock. He is the Rock from Exodus and Numbers. The Rock was struck once to provide the living water and if you want to access it again and again and again, YOU CAN! But you don’t strike it anymore, just SPEAK!

Are you desperate today? Do you desire something more in your life? Your spirit is thirsty. Mine is thirsty. There is not a single thing in this world that will quench that thirst, not drugs, not alcohol, not sex, not movies, not video games, not food, and not anything else you find satisfaction in.....

Your deepest longing and desire is for the the living water that Jesus provides. Jesus died once, struck by the cross so that you could come to Him, speak to Him, and receive life, satisfaction, peace, joy, security, healing, cleansing, renewing, and more.

Will you come to Him? Will you speak to Him? He is waiting.....