

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

“Water from the Rock”

The following is a rough abstract of the teaching on the tape. The teaching was originally done from hand written notes.

Ex 17:1-7

- 1 The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.
- 2 So they quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses replied, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?"
- 3 But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?"
- 4 Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me."
- 5 The LORD answered Moses, "Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.
- 6 **I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock**, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.
- 7 And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?" NIV

The Lord told Moses that He would stand before him at Horeb and He commanded Moses to strike the rock. God was not just giving Moses a miraculous means of obtaining water for the people, He was also establishing a type.

Ps 18:2

The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. NIV

The Lord is the Rock and Moses' action was to be a prophetic type of the day when the Rock would be struck and cleansing water would pour forth.

John 19:34

Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. NIV

Moses striking the rock was done to show what would be done to Jesus on the cross. He bled blood and water from His side giving birth to His bride, the church.

1 Cor 10:1-4

- 1 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea.
- 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.
- 3 They all ate the same spiritual food

4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. NIV

The New Testament tells us plainly that the rock they drank from was Christ.

From this first incident of getting water from the Rock, much happened to Israel. They received the Ten Commandments. They built the Tabernacle. They defeated enemies. They sent spies. They lost their nerve. They wandered in the wilderness for forty years.

Num 20:1-8

- 1 In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.
- 2 Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron.
- 3 They quarreled with Moses and said, "If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the LORD!
- 4 Why did you bring the LORD's community into this desert, that we and our livestock should die here?
- 5 Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!"
- 6 Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them.
- 7 The LORD said to Moses,
- 8 "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. **Speak to that rock** before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink."

NIV

Near the end of their wanderings (Num. 20:22-24 compared with Num. 33:38), the Israelites complain of thirst once again. Note the Lord's direction to Moses on this occasion. He told Moses to speak to the rock.

Num 20:9-13

- 9 So Moses took the staff from the LORD's presence, just as he commanded him.
- 10 He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?"
- 11 Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.
- 12 But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."
- 13 These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with the LORD and where he showed himself holy among them. NIV

Moses and Aaron disobeyed. Moses actually struck the rock twice! The Lord said that because they did not honor Him as holy before the people, they would not be allowed to enter the land.

This judgment seems harsh if all we were talking about was protocol. After all, didn't the people get water? Didn't they know that the water came from the Lord? Yes, they received the water, but because Moses did not follow the Lord's command, they missed the message. The Lord said, "Speak to the rock."

John 7:37-39

37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.

38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. NIV

Jesus called the Spirit living water. His pronouncement was made during the culmination of the feast of tabernacles as a priest poured water out at the altar representing the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Isa 12 NIV

1 In that day you will say: "I will praise you, O LORD. Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you have comforted me.

2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation."

3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

4 In that day you will say: "Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.

5 Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world.

6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you."

Verse 3 more than likely gave birth to the ceremony of pouring water out during the feast of tabernacles.

Following is a quote of Alfred Edersheim from his book The Temple: Its Ministry and Services:

"the Talmud says distinctly: 'Why is the name of it called, The drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said: "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.'" Hence, also, the feast and the peculiar joyousness of it are alike designated as those of 'the drawing out of water'; for, according to the same Rabbinical authorities, the Holy Spirit dwells in many only through joy."¹

The reason that the Lord told Moses to speak to the rock is because the second outpouring of water represented the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

¹ (from The Temple, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1999 by BibleSoft)

Deut 32:51

This is because both of you broke faith with me in the presence of the Israelites at the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the Desert of Zin and because you did not uphold my holiness among the Israelites. NIV

It was an issue of holiness. Jesus was only crucified once. He now sits at the right hand of the Father pouring out the Holy Spirit to all who ask.

Acts 2:33

Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. NIV

Luke 11:9-13

9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?

12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" NIV

How many times have we been guilty of striking at the Rock instead of speaking to Him? He is gracious and will pour out His Holy Spirit upon all who ask.

The reason why we started here in our examination of the Tabernacle of Moses is to gain a sense of the importance the Lord places on types and symbols in Scripture. Water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit and Moses' speaking to the Rock was to have been a prophetic type of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But Moses struck the rock twice in anger instead. He and Aaron interfered with God's establishment of a type. For this, they would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land.

This should give us some measure of how much value the Lord places on symbols and types in Scripture. The Tabernacle was a mobile symbol of the entire story of redemption. All its coverings, furnishing, and services spoke of the One who was coming who would be the ultimate sacrifice. In this series, we will examine the Tabernacle to learn what it tells us about Jesus Christ and His church.