

8034U

KAMLOOPS STUDY WEEKEND - 2006

CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS

Speaker: Bro. Jim Cowie

Study #3: The Rock that followed them

Reading: Exodus 17: 1-7

Thanks brother Dan, and good afternoon, b&s and young people.

Well, it's so very nice to see all of you who have come from a distance today, as well as those that belong to this place. I just want to say at the outset, b&s, that I don't take that for granted, nor do I take for granted the fact that you've had to make a special effort to have me here again; I seem to come through here fairly often and I know that it is a special effort, we actually call what you are doing this weekend in Australia, a special effort, because it does require a bit of extra effort on behalf of the ecclesia who is putting it on. But I hope it will not be a wasted effort.

In our studies thus far, we've seen how fundamental the issues are of this subject, Christ in the Wilderness. Last Wednesday night, we looked at Marah and Elim and we saw in those two places, a cameo of our whole life in the truth; suffering leading ultimately to glory to the 'place of the mighty ones', and that's of course, why we do what we're doing today, it's part of that process to bring us ultimately to Elim. In our studies last evening, we focussed on Exodus 16, and there we saw the fundamental importance of God in our lives, and we saw how that the manna spoke not only of the work and the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of the power of the word of God which was seen in Him as the end product, and when Yahweh rained bread from heaven upon Israel, He was giving us a clue as to how we would ultimately attain to eternal life. Today, we have before us, two sessions, Exodus 17, we've divided this up because there are 2 centres of focus in this chapter upon the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we're going to explore this chapter and many of you, of course, will a few years ago, have heard studies on Amalek, and so you're going to hear some of that material again, but the focus this time won't be so much on Amalek, but on Christ. I was chuffed, as they say, just a few days ago, when we were talking to a small group of brethren at Okanagan, and somehow the subject matter of Amalek came up, and brother Paul Osborn piped up straight away, that the major lesson of Amalek was, human self interest, and that we had emphasized in our studies some years ago, but obviously he had picked up on that and hadn't forgotten it.

Well Exodus 17 begins with Israel pursuing their way towards the Land, and we read

there in verse 1, 'And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of Yahweh, and they pitched in Rephidim'. Now this place 'Rephidim' is going to play a very important part, in the subject here this afternoon. The issue that is before us and was certainly before Israel, is the question that is raised in that final verse that brother Dan read for us. It is the question, 'is Yahweh among us or not?' that was the issue confronting Israel. They had, of course, ample signs that He was with them: there was the cloud that stood above them that lead them in the way, it became a pillar of fire by night. There was the giving of quail in chapter 16, that they might eat meat to the full; there was the provision of the manna, and for six days of that first week, the giving of the manna that they went out to collect, the visible, the empirical sign of Yahweh's grace and mercy to them, and a sign of His presence with them. We are apt, of course, to criticize Israel because we would say, well, given that they had the cloud in which was the glory of Yahweh revealed to them in chapter 16, as we read in that chapter at verse 10, 'they looked towards the wilderness and the glory of Yahweh appeared in the cloud'. They had the cloud, the manna and many other signs that God was actually with them and yet they murmured, they complained - they were faithless. Well, I would submit to you, b&s, that we too, have not been without the signs of Yahweh in the earth, in our era of time! My mother was baptized in the year that Israel became an Israeli state, and she was walking on air! I was baptized in the year that Jerusalem was taken from the hands of the Arabs in 1967, and I was walking on air as were the whole brotherhood. And I've seen many other indications of the fact, **that Yahweh has been in the earth!** He has given signs to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, that He's been active! We've seen the hand of God in our own life from time to time; there are many indications that Yahweh is with us, He is among us! but Israel questioned that! That was the issue in Exodus 17 verse 7, it was the issue! They tempted Yahweh saying, 'Is Yahweh among us or no?'

Well, how would you see Him? They had visible evidence, but of course, visible evidence or miracles are of no value whatsoever, they're of no value to anyone, unless you have another important ingredient - and that is **faith**. You've got to be able to see beyond what can be seen with the eyes, and with the eye of faith see things which are **invisible** to the eye. It's that issue that I want to spend a little time on, because it's the prelude to this story about the Rock that is smitten in Horeb. Let's just step back then to chapter 16 of Exodus and verse 32, 'Moses said, this is the word that Yahweh commanded', so here we've got the 3rd type of manna which we considered last evening, **the incorruptible manna**. 'Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations (notice this) that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt.'

So Aaron was to take a earthen jar, he was to fill it with this incorruptible manna which represented the immortality firstly and initially of Christ, the hidden manna which is to be given to His brethren in due time. (slide #2) He was to place it somewhere, so look at verse 33, 'Moses said to Aaron, take a pot and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before Yahweh, to be kept for your generations'. Now 'laying it up before

Yahweh' means that he put it, later on of course, in the Ark when the Ark was constructed. And verse 34 says, 'And Yahweh commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept'. Then when they constructed the Ark in chapter 35, it was placed **in the Ark** of the covenant; now nobody could see it there; the Ark was placed in the Most Holy; one man went in there once a year, he didn't open the lid, so not even he saw the hidden pot of manna; and yet we read in verse 32, 'do this that **they may see** the bread'. They would not see it with their eyes, they would have to believe as that Ark was carried towards the Land of Promise, they would have to believe that the hidden pot of manna was in there! You could not see it with your eyes, in other words, the secret of this is, **that you had to see the invisible!** You had to see it with the eye of faith, now that was the lesson that Israel was taught at the end of chapter 16 and it's precisely that same lesson which opens chapter 17.

Because they come to Rephidim, now Rephidim means 'balusters' as a railing spread along; Gesenius says 'props or supports' (7508) or 'something by which you can support yourself'. This was a place that was meant to give Israel support in their journey to the kingdom, but it didn't prove to be so. Do you know why? They didn't have perception, they didn't have faith, they could not see the invisible, and Rephidim presented to them a conundrum; it was an oasis with trees but without visible water (slide #3). The water here at Rephidim was subterranean because Israel found none, it says that at the end of verse 1; 'there was no water for the people to drink'. So faith was necessary to see the invisible and that's the lesson that God was trying to drive home to His people; I'm trying to get you into the kingdom, you have to have faith. You have to be like Moses! When they came to Rephidim this is what they saw - they saw trees but no evident water! Now there must have been water there, how do we know that? well, there were trees there, trees don't live without water, so there had to be water there but they **could not see it with their eyes**. So Yahweh was teaching them that essential principle, you have to see the invisible. So it's said of Moses in the record of Hebrews 11 verse 27, 'by faith he forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. That was the key to Moses success, now that's a pretty simple lesson, isn't it? it's fundamental like the lessons that we've seen in our first two studies, but without it, b&s and young people, we are doomed. It is vitally important for us, to walk by faith and not by sight. Faith can only come by hearing, and hearing as we learnt last evening, is only by the Word of God.

So we approach then, this subject of **the Rock that followed them**, with that as our platform, our basis to proceed. Now brother Dan mentioned that the context in front of us is drawn upon by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10 and I want to actually take you now to 1 Corinthians 10 and we'll have a look at those words just to set the basis for what is to follow. 1 Corinthians 10 verses 1 to 4 and the first line of verse 5, so here in 1 Corinthians 10 Paul says in verse 1, 'Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant' which implies of course that it would be possible for the Corinthians and therefore for us, not to see ourselves in the wilderness wanderings. That's what Paul is saying! he's saying, 'brethren, I don't want you to be ignorant; you should be looking back at the wilderness wanderings and seeing yourself in that!' because what God was

doing in Israel, was a cameo of your life in the truth, you're going to go through the same experiences, and the story for them didn't turn out all that well. So he says in verse 1, 'how that **all** our fathers (I want you to notice the use of the word '**all**') all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat' (so you can't miss the point, we're all involved, in fact, in the next verse, all is used for the 5th time; 5 is the number of grace, God had shown His grace to Israel and He had brought them out of Egypt; He brought them through the Red Sea; He fed them with manna and with water from the rock; they had all that was required and they were all involved, but look at verse 5). '**But** with most of them (and that's how that should read) but with most of them God was not well pleased', reason? lack of faith, they could not see the invisible. So let's then focus on verse 4 because that's why we're primarily here, that's the lesson of this, isn't it? and he goes on to talk about them being types for us. We should not be ignorant of that, b&s, because at the judgment seat of Christ, our destiny will be determined by whether or not we have learnt the fundamental lessons of Israel's wanderings through the wilderness.

In verse 4 he says, 'They did all drink of the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them'. So he's talking about a spiritual Rock, by which it means 'a typical rock'. So here we are in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 4, and the story before us in Exodus 17 is of Moses being commanded to strike the 't'zur' (that's the word used for 'rock' in Exodus 17; the 't'zur' (6697) at Rephidim, and that's about here, a little short of Mount Horeb (slide #4), it's the district of Horeb as we shall see in a moment. Down here at Rephidim, he was to strike that 't'zur'; but, 40 years later, he was to speak to the 'cela' (5553). It's a different word used in Numbers 20 as we shall see, at Kadesh-barnea (the sanctuary of the wandering son) (6947) which is the meaning of that name. So here, after a probation period of 40 years, Israel were to encounter again, another rock, this time a different rock, but representing the same person, namely the Lord Jesus Christ, but in a different phase of His work. So that's what Paul means when he says, 'they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them'; there was a rock at the beginning of their walk, and there was a rock 40 years later at the end of their walk. Now, as you'll see in a moment, when we quote from brother Thomas, brother Thomas was one of those who believed that when the water came out of the rock at Horeb or Rephidim, that that water followed them through the wilderness, and he could be right, I'm not arguing with you about that, but Paul doesn't say that here, does he? he says, 'they drank of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock', and it could imply that that water followed them, but he's not then going on to say, that that water followed them, he says, 'and that **rock** followed them, and that Rock was Christ'. So it was the rock that followed them, the water may well of been following them as well.

The point he wants to make, b&s, is that Christ was there, and we're going to see that here, in Exodus 17, He was there as the crucified Christ, and at the end He was there as an exalted immortal Christ, two different phases of His work, but He had followed them through their entire wilderness journey. Now you just think about that! I had my

first encounter with a crucified Christ when I was baptized into His death, He was there at the beginning of my walk in the wilderness of life; the next time I have an encounter with Him, I will see Him as the immortal High priest of His people, who has come to judge and to determine our destiny. He will be there at the beginning of my walk and He will be there at the end of my walk, and in fact, He will have followed me all the way through the wilderness wanderings. That's the point that Paul wants to make here! So the emphasis is on the **Rock** that followed them!

So when we come back to Exodus 17, we now have Paul's words to guide us. We read in chapter 17 verse 2, 'Wherefore the people did chide with Moses (because there was no water) and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt, this is the word 'nacah' (5254), (we've met this before in our studies and we'll meet it again in a moment), 'wherefore do ye test or prove Yahweh? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Listen, you have brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst'. They thought that the purpose for being brought into the truth was to be denied the basics of life and perish in the wilderness; but of course, that wasn't the purpose! They began to blame God and His agents, Moses and Aaron, for leading them towards disaster. Now that's so typical of human beings that when the wheels fall off for whatever reason, and things start to go nasty, we turn usually to blame someone else; Yahweh was actually testing them, He wanted to know if they had faith, whether they could see the Invisible, and they couldn't see **the Invisible!**

And he tells them, that's He's not too far away, because in verse 4 Moses cries to Yahweh seeking help as to what he should do; 'they're almost ready to stone me', he says. Then in verse 5 we read this, 'Yahweh said to Moses, 'go on before the people', and we'll just pause there for a minute. **Go on before the people!** they were at Rephidim, when you read further into that verse, in fact, in verse 6 it says, 'I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb'. So, going on before the people meant that Moses had to move down the path towards Mount Horeb, and as I said, Horeb is actually a name for a district but Mount Horeb was still some 50 to 80 kilometres away, so that was a fair distance away. But he was to go on before the people, and there could be a number of reasons for that - #1 because what's going to happen was a type of the crucifixion of Christ, it may well be speaking of Christ being crucified outside the camp. Also, of course, the fact that Moses is going on before the people and smite the rock to give water or life, - #2 that could be typical of first fruits from the dead. That Christ would lead the way to life. Whatever, the fact is, that it didn't happen in the camp, it was to happen outside the camp in the direction of Mount Horeb.

So then, we read in verse 5, 'Go on before the people and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, he says in verse 6, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.' So he was to smite the rock and waters would flow from it. I want you to notice something about verse 6, we are focussing on the **rock** in our

studies, the Rock that followed them, typical of Christ says Paul, but the rock is not the only thing that we should be focussing on. Verse 6 tells us that **Yahweh** says to Moses, **I will stand before thee** there upon the rock; so then, there's a promise given, 'I will stand before thee there', so who is this One who would stand upon the rock? was it Yahweh Himself? NO, we know that from Isaiah 63 verse 9, because that chapter recounts the wilderness wanderings and it tells us, 'In all their affliction He (Yahweh) was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them', so here we've got a testimony that when Yahweh says I will be there, it wasn't Him personally (it's a bit like when Moses saw the angel on the mountain, it wasn't Yahweh personally but His personal representative) it was the angel of His presence, which is almost as good as having God there. This angel, not only given the power and glory of Yahweh but also carrying, as it were, before Israel, His character. 'My name is in him' it says in Exodus 23 verses 20 to 23. Yahweh was manifested in this angel and he was to stand upon that rock. Have you got a picture of this? let's just make out that this is a podium or a lectern (as we call it in Australia), this podium is the rock and you've got an angel standing on it; there's an identity between the angel and the rock. Now that's an important element in our study, because we're going to see in a moment, who that angel represented in the scheme of things apart from being the personal representative of God.

Just while we're here in verse 6, it says, 'behold, I will stand before thee on the rock **in Horeb**'. Now 'Horeb' means 'desert' (2722) (slide #5) and there are 17 occurrences in the Old Testament, and it has the idea of 'desolate' from the root 'chareb' meaning 'to parch through drought', and by analogy the word can be used to mean 'desolate, destroy or kill', and this of course, lines up with Israel's charge against Moses in verse 3. They said, why have you brought us out into this wilderness, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? We're going to die parched and dried out, desolated, destroyed, and here they were in Horeb where the water was to flow abundantly from that rock. So you can see, I think, b&s, that all of this is setting forth the position in which you and I find ourselves; we are in a desolate place, there's no doubt about that. We are in a land, in a spiritual sense, that is dry and barren wherein is no water, that is the condition of the world; but you and I can drink freely from the water which Yahweh has provided through the Rock, our Lord Jesus Christ, who was struck that that water of life might flow freely to men who would partake of it. That's the story before us!

So then, who is this one who would stand upon the rock in Horeb? I want to take you to Deuteronomy 33 where here we have the biblical commentary on who this rock is, or who it represents. Deuteronomy 33 verse 8, now here we are in the chapter of the blessing of Moses upon the children of Israel, and in verse 8 he says speaking to Levi, 'Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah'. Now we know from Exodus 17 verse 7 that Rephidim or at least the place near Rephidim where this rock was struck was called both Massah and Meribah; we know that Meribah is also used 40 years later, of Kadesh-barnea (we'll come to that in due time, God willing). This is doubtless then, talking about Exodus 17, now it's interesting when you begin to analyse this as to what this blessing of Moses is saying. We won't go into all the detail here, but

Levi, of course, the subject of the blessing, means 'joined to' (3878). He makes mention of the Thummim and the Urim which this holy one would use in divine judgment; and the holy one he refers to, this word 'holy' (2623) 'chacyd', actually means 'faithful, kind, godly, and refers to a holy one'; Rotherham actually translates it 'as the man of thy loving kindness; it is used of Christ in Psalm 16 verse 10 and again in Psalm 89 verse 19, so there's no doubt really when you start to explore the use of that word, that the holy one he's talking about here, is a reference to the angel that stood upon that rock. The angel was God's personal representative, and I believe it was Michael, and Michael means 'one who is like El or God' (4317) but points forward to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Because Christ when He comes is referred to as Michael, He's going to take over the role of Michael, He's going to be the Judge, He's going to use Urim and Thummim as it were in judgment; He will be the man, Yahweh's holy One, so we read at the end of verse 8 of Deuteronomy 33, 'whom thou didst prove at Massah and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah'. So when Israel murmured against Moses, they were actually murmuring against Yahweh's personal representative; it was as if they were murmuring against Christ, that's what this verse is telling us. These two words, which we'll come to again when we link these two words back in Exodus 17, 'prove' (5254) and 'strive' (7378) are the basis of the name Massah (4532) and Meribah (4809), they're the basis of the Hebrew words by which this place is named in due time.

I want to quote to you some words from brother Thomas, because he talks about this passage in Deuteronomy 33 in Eureka and he says this: 'Thy Thummim and thy Urim be with the man thy holy one who thou didst prove at Massah and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah', So he quotes this verse then he says, 'The holy man' (word is in the Hebrew '**ish-khasid**') with whom they strove stood upon the rock and in a figure made the rock a part of himself, and representative of something afterwards to be smitten by certain, who like Moses, should speak unadvisedly with their lips. In that way it became a spiritual rock. Paul says, 'the rock was Christ', that is, it was representative of Him. He goes on to say, 'the holy man upon the rock was the Elohist representative of the Deity dwelling in light whom no man hath seen or can see. He spoke the words of the invisible One, by His power placed at his disposal, water was made to flow. Hence, eternal and almighty power pervaded the rock in Horeb, so long as the water gushed forth, and followed them in their wanderings. The holy man himself was an embodiment of this power and as the same power was to be manifested in the nature of Abraham, and thus become his seed, the rock became highly typical of Christ.

So here we've got the holy one, the angel, sent by Yahweh to personally represent Himself, identified with the rock that was smitten; it was another way of saying, b&s and young people, that when God sent His Son among men, He would have to be made in the same nature, that He might be smitten; that that work could not have been successful had it not been for the fact that He was identified closely with God. The angel standing upon that rock was the divine representative amongst Israel, so when Christ came, He was the divine representative amongst men, yet He bore their nature that He might be smitten, that water might flow to give life to all those who'd come unto the Father by Him. That's the message! So when we talk about this rock in Horeb, let us

never forget that element of the subject, that the angel is actually standing on the rock, he's identified with it for that reason. Brother Thomas picks up on that, there in Eureka.

Now then, having that as a basis, we can come back once more to Exodus 17 and here in verse 6 we want to focus upon the rock. In verse 6 we read, 'Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb'. Now this word 'rock' in verse 6 is the Hebrew word 't'zur' (6697) and it means 'a large rock or a boulder'. Moses struck this rock with the serpent rod portraying the crucifixion of Christ, thus we believe 't'zur' relates here to the mortality of Christ. If you're going to strike something in this symbology it must refer to His mortality and this rock is struck with the serpent rod. Now I want to spend some time on the serpent rod, because it's important both in this study and the next one (slide #10).

The serpent rod, in Exodus 4 verses 2 to 4, the serpent rod was cast to the ground, remember, by Moses, it became a serpent to be picked up and turned back into a rod. In other words, it was related to the earth, it was cast to the ground and to sin because the serpent is the biblical symbol of sin. But, it is also called in Exodus 4 verse 20 and again in chapter 17 verse 9, 'the rod of God'. So in what way can a serpent rod that is related to earth and sin, be called the rod of God? This rod is used 5 times in the 10 plagues on Egypt, it therefore, represented authority to bring affliction on flesh. So when Moses held out the serpent rod over the land of Egypt, Yahweh's affliction was brought upon that nation. This is the rod that is used to smite the rock (Christ) and it therefore represents the crucifixion of Christ (and we will have cause to see when we come in our studies in Numbers 21) that that's precisely what this rod represents, it represents the means by which Yahweh would bring affliction on the flesh in the process of destroying the power of sin. It points forward to the work of our Lord Jesus Christ who was hung upon a tree; it was the rod of God, it was the means of demonstrating what ought to be done to the serpent! Now this is very important in our next study, because we're going to see that it actually does represent the cross of Christ!

So we've established that the rock represents Christ, that the angel who stood upon that rock represents the Divine element in the atonement. It points forward to the fact that Yahweh would be manifested in mortal man to overcome the power of sin. We see the serpent rod being like the tree upon which He was impaled, striking that rock, and water flows out of Him; that's the drama of the rock in Horeb.

And it says at the end of verse 6, 'And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel'. He memorializes that place by calling it '**Massah** and **Meribah**' to which we'll return in a moment. So have you got the story, the picture of that? it's pretty simple, isn't it? it is a wonderful portrayal of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ in the overcoming of the power of sin. But earlier we pointed out that there were 2 rocks in Israel's experience in the wilderness, representing Christ, both of them but in different aspects of His work. We need to make a comparison now between 2 contexts - we need to look at Exodus 17 and at the other record 40 years later which occurs for us in Numbers 20. Now it may

be appropriate if you can arrange this, to have one hand in either place; I'll do my best because I tend to wave my hands a bit, but I'll do my best to be in both places at the same time.

When we get these places before us, we find this contrast, deliberate contrast (Slide #11):

In Exodus 17 verse 5 we read, 'Take with thee the elders of Israel', so Moses in chapter 17 at Rephidim took with him the elders of his nation. They represent in the scheme of things, in the typology, the leaders of the Mosaic system, and these were the men who demanded the death of Christ. They went to Pilate and said to him, 'we will not have this man to reign over us; we have no king but Caesar, we want Him crucified'. The elders of Israel! Yet the record of Numbers 20 tells us that when they came to Kadesh-barnea 40 years later, in verse 8, Moses is told this, 'Take the rod and gather thou the assembly together (the ecclesia) thou and Aaron thy brother and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock. So shalt thou give the congregation and their beasts, drink'. So whereas in Rephidim it's the elders of Israel, Moses is told in Numbers 20 at Meribah, to take Aaron his brother, who is typical of Christ, the high priest, after the order of Melchisedek, one who was an immortal priest, but of course, Aaron only represents him in that role. So there's a difference there, there is also a difference in the rods employed here because when you go on a bit further, you see that in Exodus 17 Moses is told 'to take thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river' (this is the serpent rod as we said, the instrument of divine authority to afflict flesh in the hands of Moses the lawgiver, a symbol for the cross of Christ. But in Numbers 30 he's told to take the rod that was in the Testimony or laid up before Yahweh in the ark. This was Aaron's rod that budded, it represents Christ, once dead, but now resurrected to an everlasting priesthood, but the whole point of Aaron's rod was to demonstrate which of the tribes and which of the families of that tribe, were in fact, Yahweh's representatives, His priests. So the rod taken in Numbers 20 is **not** the serpent rod, but rather Aaron's rod that had budded. So there are distinct differences here, aren't there?

There's another difference as well: Moses was told to **strike** the rock at Rephidim, he was told to **speak** to the rock at Meribah. Quite different! There are also 2 kinds of rock! So we come in Rephidim and we saw in verse 6 that the rock was a 't'zur', it spoke typically of Christ's crucifixion, He was smitten for our iniquities. in fact, the same words are used in Isaiah 53, 'smitten for our iniquities'. But in Numbers 20, Moses is told to '**speak ye** unto the rock, this is a different rock, it represents Christ in His **priesthood** as an immortal; you can't crucify Christ afresh, the Hebrews wanted to do that, Hebrews 6 verse 6, once smitten He must now be spoken to or through. We address the Father through Him, He is our mediator an entirely different roll. The word 't'zur' was used in Exodus 17, a huge rock or boulder set in the earth that could provide shade for man and beast, a type of Christ's mortality because He could be smitten; but in Numbers 20, the rock is a 'cela', a 'cliff or a crag' (5553) high up and inaccessible to man. It represents the immortal Christ as the high priest of His people. So these are the

contrasts to be made between Exodus 17 and Numbers 20, when you lay the historical account side by side. Now most of us are familiar with this, some may not be, but it's important to see what happened here in Numbers 20.

Let's just confirm in our minds what a 't'zur' and a 'cela' represent. Slide #13.

-Here on the left hand side (this is an Australian boulder, by the way) the 't'zur' refers to a huge boulder. It can supply some shade for man and beast, but it's not like the 'cela' on the right.

-The 'cela' refers to a lofty craggy rock or cliff face, high and inaccessible for the time being from men, quite distinct are these two things.

-Both of these words 't'zur' and 'cela' are used of Yahweh; the first occurrence of 't'zur' is in that context which we have been considering, Exodus 17 verse 6 where it occurs twice. Numbers 20 verse 8 is also the first occurrence in the Old Testament of the word 'cela' and that's interesting, isn't it? the very first time the Spirit uses these two words, 't'zur' and 'cela' are in the context which speak about Christ typically. Paul unites these two passages in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 4, as we've seen.

-Both 't'zur' and 'cela' are used to represent Yahweh particularly in the Psalm, 'Yahweh is my Rock, my 't'zur' for instance (Psa 18:2, 2 Sam 22:2). The context and the scriptural commentary interpret these two words in their context.

-So 't'zur' in these contexts represents a divine representative who was **mortal**. He could be struck, smitten with a serpent rod; but in Numbers 20, the 'cela' represents a divine representative who was **immortal**, he had to be spoken to or through; he represents the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry as a high priest which is precisely where He is now.

So let's just take a bit of a closer look at Numbers 20 verse 8: 'take the rod and gather now the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes'. So here's our Hebrew word 'cela', a lofty, craggy rock that is inaccessible. It happens to occur in this context 5 times; 't'zur' in Exodus 17 occurs 2 times, twice because 2 is the number of division or separation and Christ was to be struck that He might be set apart, that He might be divided amongst men; but in chapter 20 of Numbers, 'cela' is there 5 times. Why? because 5 is the number of grace, it speaks, b&s and young people of the work He is performing now, a work of mediation on our behalf in heaven.

Now you might wonder why I'm labouring all this! Sometimes we wonder whether or not God might have been a little bit too hard on Moses, because He was not sanctified in the eyes of the people, when Moses said, 'must **we** bring water out of this rock?' and he struck it! Well, not only did he not sanctify Yahweh in the eyes of the people, but he also destroyed the typology; he utterly destroyed the typology that has been so

wonderfully set forth in these two rocks. In effect, by type, he crucified the Son of God afresh, that's why he could not enter into the Land. He was to speak to the rock, but he struck it twice, thus destroying the type. It's '**cela**' we believe, that represents Christ in His immortality as a mediator between God and man. Have you got a picture of this? can you conjure up a picture of this? Forty years earlier, Moses had taken a serpent rod and struck a rock and water came gushing out; in his anger, righteous anger against the unbelievable faithlessness of Israel at Kadesh-barnea, when he was instructed to **speak** to that rock, he was furious! he had in his hand the rod of Aaron that had budded, that rod would have had (it was alive), it would have had green leaves, it would have had blossoms and almonds on it; it was probably that rod that he used although you'll notice that it says in verse 11 of Numbers 20 and some suggest when it says in verse 11, 'And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the cela twice'. Some suggest that the phrase 'his rod' may well mean that he had with him the serpent rod and he might have used that. I prefer to believe that he was doing what God told him to do, to take Aaron's rod, and he used it to strike the cela, and blossoms and leaves and maybe the almonds were everywhere, destroying the type, because he was unable to control his anger and he spake unadvisedly with his lips. He acted foolishly with his hand!

Now Yahweh, of course, could not fail to respond even under those circumstances; had no water come from that rock, it would have been a worse situation than what it was; so He permitted water to come from the rock, to supply Israel, but he was bitterly disappointed that everything he'd been trying to portray, had been ruined by a rash act. That's the tragedy of Numbers 20, **that rock that followed them was Christ**, seen in His two aspects of work: firstly, the divine agency to overcome the power of sin, to be struck; but thereafter as a rock, a mediatory rock, He had to be spoken to and through, in order to attain ultimate redemption

Well, this story goes on throughout the scriptures, and I just want to wind this up now by taking you through a number of passages. Here they are! firstly:

**divine commentary** - now you might just want to take a note of these (I'm not going to take you to these verses), but you just might want to mark in your bibles, what these words 'rock' that occur here, are in the Hebrew.

You take Psalm 78 verses 15 and 16, here's the commentary on what happened at both Rephidim and at Kadesh-barnea 40 years apart, 'He clave the rocks ('t'zur)', in the wilderness,( so it's plural, so this is exactly looking at both of these occasions!) And he gave them drink as out of the great depths; he brought streams also out of the rock (cela) a different word deliberately, 'and caused waters to run down the rivers'. So here's the divine commentary looking at the two ends of the wilderness wanderings and that's what Yahweh did both at Rephidim and Meribah.

Psalm 105 verse 41, 'He opened the rock (t'zur) and the waters gushed out; they ran in dry places like a river.

Psalm 114 verse 8, 'Which turned the rock (t'zur) into a standing water, and the flint into a fountain of waters'.

Isaiah 48 verse 21, 'They thirsted not when He lead them through the deserts; He caused the waters to flow out of the rock (t'zur) for them: He clave the rock (t'zur) also, and the waters gushed out'.

Now what is God trying to do here, do you think, b&s? what is He trying to do? He's speaking through the Psalmist, He's speaking through the prophet, He's taking Israel back time and again, to the events that happened in these two places. He's trying to impress His people through the prophets, that the issues of this place are fundamental to the attainment of eternal life; and sadly, sadly these places memorialize Israel's failure. That's why they were named. You come back now to Exodus 17 verse 7 finally, that's why they got these names. Verse 7, 'he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah **because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted Yahweh**'. Massah means 'temptation' from the root 'nasah' (4532) meaning 'testing or proving or trial'. There are 5 occurrences in the bible and 4 occur in the Old Testament. Meribah means 'strife or contention' (4809) and the name occurs 8 times in the Old Testament and it lines up, as we said earlier, with these words, chiding' (riyb) you can see that in the name, Meri-bah, strife, controversy or dispute. Because they 'tested or tempted Yahweh', 'nasah', they say it's cognate with Massah (I'm not a Hebraist) but you can see the cognate meaning, to test, try, prove or tempt; Massah meaning to 'test or prove'. So the names of this place were given because of what they did there. These names memorialize their failure to see the Invisible; and this was a generational failure. When God sent His Son as He said He would through Isaiah 8 verse 14, that 'He would be for a sanctuary, for a stone of stumbling (that word 'stone' means 'a building stone'), when He would send His Son to build the ecclesia, He would come amongst His own people, says John 1, and not be recognized by them, they wouldn't know who He was! He would be it says, 'a stone of stumbling and a rock (t'zur) of offence'. Guess what they did with Him? He came amongst them as a t'zur of offence, a stumbling block, and they **struck Him with a rod**, that's what they did! So this was generational failure! What happens back in Exodus 17 was a precursor of things to come; they were not able to see Him who was invisible!

What about you and me? What about us? Now I want you to come now, and we're going to finish in John 7, and have a look at where we stand in relation to these things. We have identified ourselves, b&s, with a Rock that was struck, we are in the way to the kingdom of God, daily we pray to our Father through the High Priest who sits at His right hand, the 'cela', to speak through the Rock. It was this one who said, in John 7 verses 37 to 41 these words, here they are, 'In that last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water'. (Now this is interesting, isn't it? because He's talking about people coming unto Him if we thirst, coming unto Him and drinking. Then He talks about us believing and

out of our belly rivers of living water, so clearly the water has come from Him to us and then it is passed on to others. So I believe, His mind is at least back in Exodus 17; but then John goes on to explain and says, 'This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying said, 'Of a truth, this is the prophet; others said, this is the Christ', most of them didn't understand what was happening; they didn't realize that what He was saying was that, **He would be the source of living water that would be passed on!** Now John says that was the Spirit, we have the Spirit, don't we? in the form of the Word of God; it has come to us in a book. Here is the testimony of the Holy Spirit! We receive it from Him but what do we do with it? Well, God was the source of this Spirit through Christ; it was He who gave the water from the rock that was struck. That water comes to us as it came to Israel and through us it is passed on to others; and it's interesting in John 7 it says, 'out of His belly shall flow living waters'. Now the **belly** in the scriptures is always used, nearly always used, of greed and self interest; Paul speaks in Philippians 3 of those whose 'god was their belly'. So self interest is reversed here, the natural tendency is reversed, here are people who receive that living water into themselves and it flows from them! That's what God wants to do, whether or not we allow Him to do that, will depend on one thing, it will depend on whether or not we really believe what Israel didn't believe, 'Is Yahweh among us or not?'