

Cure for Grumbling: The Rock That Gushes Living Water

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[0 : 00] Good morning. My name is Sean. I'm one of the pastors of Trinity Cambridge Church. It's my joy to preach God's Word to you this morning. If you turn with me to Exodus chapter 16, we were trying to finish all of 16. Last week we didn't get to, so we're going to be finishing that up and finishing the passage that we have for today, which is 17.1-7. So we'll go from Exodus 16.22 to 17.7. If you don't have a Bible, if you raise your hand, we have a Bible we can lend you.

If you're not familiar with your Bibles, Exodus is the second book in the Bible after Genesis, before Leviticus. Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's Word.

Heavenly Father, we tremble before your Word. I stand before you not to bring my own message, but as your servant, as your messenger.

help me to faithfully proclaim what you have said in your Word.

may the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our rock and redeemer. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. If you are able, please stand for the reading of God's Word from Exodus 16.22 to 17.7.

[1 : 45] On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, he said to them, this is what the Lord has commanded.

Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning. So they laid it aside till the morning as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, and there were no worms in it.

Moses said, eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the Lord. Today you will not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none.

On the seventh day, some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. And the Lord said to Moses, how long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See, the Lord has given you the Sabbath.

Therefore, on the sixth day, he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place. Let no one go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.

[3 : 14] Now, the house of Israel called its name manna. It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. Moses said, this is what the Lord has commanded. Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness when I brought you out of the land of Egypt. And Moses said to Aaron, take a jar and put an omer of manna in it and place it before the Lord to be kept throughout your generations.

As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the testimony to be kept. The people of Israel ate the manna forty years till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan. And omer is the tenth part of an ephah.

All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped at Rephidim. But there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, give us water to drink.

And Moses said to them, why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord? But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, why did you bring us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst? So Moses cried to the Lord, what shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me. And the Lord said to Moses, pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarreling of the people of Israel. And because they tested the Lord by saying, is the Lord among us or not? This is God's holy and authoritative word. Please be seated.

We saw from last week in Exodus 16, 4-5, that the Lord was testing Israel by giving them two specific instructions regarding the manna, the bread from heaven that he rained on them. The first instruction was that they were to go out and gather one day's portion every day, no more and no less. And they were not to keep any leftovers for the following day. And by not gathering more than the day's portion, they were to learn to trust in the Lord and to depend on him for their daily provision, rather than trying to provide for themselves. And there was also a second instruction. And this had to do with the Sabbath rest. It says in verses 22 to 26, on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, he said to them, this is what the Lord has commanded. Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning. So when the Israelites tried to save some of the manna because they didn't believe that God would provide for them on the following day, and they tried to keep manna and the leftovers for the following day, the manna, bread, worms, and it stank. However, when they kept the manna overnight on the sixth day, the manna did not stink. It did not grow worms. It was preserved so that they could have it on the seventh day. And before this reason, also, God rained twice the portion of manna on the sixth day so that on the seventh day, he would give them nothing. He would not rain anything down, and they would eat what they had saved from the day before. So on Friday, when people realized that after they've collected all the manna, as much as people wanted to eat, they realized that there's a double portion. There's more, there's enough for each person to take two omers each instead of one, which was what was allotted for the rest of the week. So they're surprised by this, and they come to Moses, so what's the deal?

[7 : 58] Why is there so much manna, extra manna today? And Moses tells him, well, because the Lord wants you to observe a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord this day, on the seventh day, the Saturday.

So that's why on the sixth day, Friday, God's not, God's giving you double portion of the manna. So this is a different rule from the earlier one about only gathering one day's portion and keeping no leftovers, but it's the same test as the first one. It's once again testing the Israelites' dependence on the Lord, whether or not they will obey his command. Since the brief mention of the Sabbath in the creation narrative in Genesis 2, 1 to 3, this is the first time that we see the Sabbath mentioned again in the Bible. And in that brief command in verse 23, we learn several important things about the Sabbath. First is that it's a day of solemn rest. When the Sabbath command is codified into law in Exodus 20, 11, the rationale for it is rooted in creation. It says, in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. God created humans to need rest, and he set the pattern for them to follow in the way he rested from creation on the seventh day.

God himself needs no rest. Isaiah 40, 28 tells us that God neither faints nor is weary. And Jesus in John 5, 17 talks about how God the Father is working even when we are not on the Sabbath day. But God sets this pattern not for himself but for our benefit because we need rest. That's why Jesus says in Mark 2, 27, the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Sabbath is not an arbitrary law that's burdensome for us to follow. God has given it to promote human flourishing.

We have some fitness trainers, maybe just one. Laura is a fitness trainer. I'm sure she would tell you this if you were to ask her. Maybe I'm giving you bad advice. If you incessantly push your muscles to their limits, right, we don't get stronger, right? We get injured because our muscles only heal and rebuild while we are resting. Is that right? That's right. God created us, body and soul, to need rest.

So think about this for a minute. God created us to do nothing but sleep for a full third of our lives. Sleeping facilitates body repair, helps brain function, keeps emotions regulated, reduces disease risk, and keeps weight under control among other innumerable benefits. There's a lot happening while we are consciously doing nothing. Some of you know this about me but I'm one of those people who can't stay awake past their bedtimes to save their lives. If you're talking to me when I'm past my bedtime and I'm tired, it doesn't matter how important you are or how interesting it is that we're, the thing it is that we're talking about, I will start falling asleep on you and I need the full eight hours to function optimally. In the past, I used to wish that I had short sleeper syndrome.

[11 : 41] You guys know about this, SSS, short sleeper syndrome. People with SSS can get fewer than six hours of sleep each night and still function normally. A lot of you guys are probably thinking, oh, I think that's me. By the way, only about one percent of the population has this. So most likely, you don't have it. And so you might think that you are functioning normally with fewer than six hours of sleep but you're probably just not functioning well enough to recognize that you're not functioning optimally. And so, but anyway, I don't wish for SSS anymore personally because sleeping is such a wonderfully humbling experience. It helps me to realize that even though I was conked out and out of commission for a full eight hours, the house did not burn down, the church did not implode, and the world did not stop spinning, God can run the universe just fine without your help.

That's what sleeping reminds us of. So should we, as new covenant Christians, observe the Sabbath? We Christians are not legally required to keep the Sabbath. Colossians 2, 16 to 17 teaches us that the Sabbath was merely a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

Jesus is, according to Romans 10, 4, the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes, and he has, according to Matthew 5, 17 to 20, he has fulfilled the law so that we Christians are no longer under the old covenant and its legal demands. However, because 2 Timothy 3, 16 to 17 says, all scripture, all scripture, including the Old Testament, is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work, and because a day of rest is a part of God's creational pattern that applies to all of humanity, we should observe a day of rest as a way of humbling ourselves and growing our dependence on God, even though we're not legally obligated to do so.

A day of rest can help us cultivate a habit of living in light of the eternal rest we have in Christ. That's what the Sabbath was intended to be, a day of solemn rest.

The Sabbath was created for man, for man, not man, for the Sabbath. And it's also not only for our personal benefit, but for the benefit of others. Because if we are working, it forces other people who are under our charge to work.

[14 : 26] So the Sabbath is a way to give rest to other people as well. It has a social and humanitarian function. Some of you probably find it very difficult to rest.

Instead, your work is like a lake that continually overflows its banks, causing flood damages to everyone around it. Your work overflows into your family life, to your church life, your own personal life, and affects your physical, relational, and spiritual health.

So you have to remember, if that's you, that God has designed you to need rest. The second thing we learn about the Sabbath from verse 23 is this. It's a holy Sabbath to the Lord.

It's holy. Meaning, it's a day that is set apart from the others. It's distinguished, consecrated from the other days. By observing the Sabbath, the Israelites were to remember that they belong to the Lord, that they are a people who are specially set apart for the Lord.

The Sabbath served to distinguish the Israelites from the other nations. In fact, the Israelites were the only ancient people group that observed a strict weekly day of rest.

[15 : 41] If you think about it, a week is a very unnatural unit of time. The only cultures that have a word for a seven-day week are cultures that have in some way come in contact with the Bible.

Nobody else orders their calendar by weeks. They use days, months, and years, but not weeks. A year makes sense astronomically because that's how long it takes for the Earth to make one orbit around the sun.

A month makes sense astronomically because that's roughly how long a lunar cycle is, 30 days or so. A day makes sense astronomically because that's how long it takes for the Earth to spin once on its axis.

But a week, we have no natural reason to observe a week save God's command in the Bible. Only cultures and civilizations that have been influenced by the biblical Sabbath observe such a day of rest.

It's a sign of the old covenant that distinguished the people of God from other nations surrounding them. This is why God took the Sabbath so seriously in the Old Testament.

[16 : 50] It was their way of saying we belong to God. We're not like these other nations. The observance of the Sabbath on Saturdays is no longer the sign of the covenant for us.

And it gets transmuted in the New Testament to the Lord's Day on Sunday when Jesus was raised from the dead. Because every gospel account tells us that Jesus was raised on the first day of the week, on Sunday.

And that conveys the newness of hope that Jesus' resurrection brings. And for the last two millennia, Christians have dedicated Sundays for worship and rest.

And we see examples of this throughout the New Testament, such as Acts 20, verse 7, 1 Corinthians 16, verse 2, where believers gather regularly for worship on the first day of the week, no longer on the seventh day of the week.

Revelation 1.10 speaks of the Lord's Day, which is a reference to Sunday. Do you treat Sunday like the rest of the world does? Just another day in the weekend?

[17 : 54] A day off work when you can do what you want to do? I noticed that ESPN, which is a sports network, is selling a new shirt nowadays.

It got my attention because it says in large, all caps, bolded print, Sundays booked. But to my dismay, at the center of this shirt is a picture of a football where there should be a cross.

Honestly, that seems sacrilegious to me. I enjoy watching New England Patriots football games, but it makes me never want to watch a Sunday football game again in my life.

The New Testament calls Sunday the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day. And we should honor it as such. Do you use Saturday to prepare for Sunday, which is what we should be doing, so that you can honor the Lord by resting in Him, worshiping Him on Sunday?

Or do you use Sunday to get ahead of your work on Monday? The Israelites, however, failed to keep the Sabbath.

[19 : 07] It says in verses 27 to 30, You can sense God's exasperation and grief in what He says here.

How long will you keep flouting my commandments? It's probably the same group of people that would try to save manna overnight earlier in the week.

Why? Because they don't trust the Lord that He will certainly provide for them. They keep trying to provide for themselves, to save for what they perceive to be an uncertain future.

The Lord used the Sabbath command to test the Israelites, to prove their faith and obedience. Do you trust the Lord to provide, or are you trusting in yourself to provide for yourself?

What does your rhythm of work and rest reveal about your faith and dependence on God? Now, with the manna raining down six days a week, the Israelites' bread problem is taken care of once and for all.

[20 : 28] But as they continue on their journey, they're still in the middle of the desert. It says in 17 verse 1, This is a recurring problem in the wilderness.

As you will see, in the first episode of the Israelites grumbling in chapter 15, they came to Marah and found that the water was bitter and not drinkable. So they grumbled against Moses, and then the Lord turned the bitter water sweet for them to drink.

But the Israelites do not let that past experience inform their attitude toward this present problem. It says in verses 2-4, In the preceding passage, the Israelites grumbled against the Lord, which is bad enough because grumbling is a sign of their rebellion against God.

It's their muttering under their breath, sedition against God. But this account escalates the situation even further. It says that the people quarreled with Moses.

And once again, they overlooked the role of the Lord and picked their fight with Moses, which is an easier target. And the word quarrel has judicial overtones.

[22 : 12] And it can be translated accuse or to level a charge at someone. It's almost like the Israelites are suing Moses. And by implication, they're bringing a charge against the Lord God himself.

You're not a gracious king after all, are you? You brought us out here from Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst. You're a sick, sadistic tyrant.

That's what you are. They're no longer merely muttering under their breath. They're now openly quarreling. Their secret grumbling has turned into brazen rebellion.

Tensions are heightened and there are rumblings of violence. Moses cries out to God saying, What shall I do? These people are about to stone me. This is why Moses names the place Massah, Massah, and Meribah.

Massah means testing and Meribah means quarreling. He names the place Testing Town or Quaralville as a reminder to future generations of Israel's sin against the Lord.

[23 : 24] There's another biblical location that is also named Meribah. And that can be confusing for some people. And that's the place mentioned in Numbers 20, where also the Israelites quarrel with Moses and with the Lord.

And the same problem is there. They lack water. That's why they're quarreling with Moses and against the Lord. And that's the place in Numbers 20 where Moses speaks rashly and strikes the rock twice with his staff, thereby failing to honor God as holy and forfeiting his right to lead the Israelites into the promised land.

Because of the similar incident and the same name, Meribah, some people conflate the two events, or they think that they're telling the same story twice, but that's not what's happening.

They're actually two different events. The event here in Exodus 17 happens at the beginning of Israel's journey toward Canaan in the wilderness of Sin, Sinai Sin in an area of Rephidim.

But the other water-producing rock miracle happens at the end of Israel's journey in the wilderness of Zin. That's a different Hebrew word. In an area called Kadesh within the wilderness.

[24 : 33] So it's not surprising that Moses names both of those places Meribah, which means quarreling, because in both of those places the Israelites quarreled with Moses and with the Lord. It's not uncommon for two different places in different regions to have the exact same name because of a shared experience or shared attribute.

For example, here in New England, when someone talks about taking a road trip to Newport, they can mean Newport, Rhode Island, or Newport, Maine, or Newport, New Hampshire, or Newport, Vermont.

In fact, there are about 30 other Newports outside of New England as well throughout the country. And many of them are named Newport because at some point in that location, there was a Newport.

Or because it was named after Christopher Newport, the captain of one of the ships that brought some of the first English settlers to Jamestown in Virginia Colony. So similarly, the two Meribahs are both named that because Israelites quarreled against the Lord at those locations.

But those two Meribahs are consistently distinguished throughout Scripture. The later Meribah in Numbers 20 is often called Meribah Kadesh, or the waters of Meribah, to distinguish from this Meribah in Exodus 17, which is called Merida in Rephidim.

[25 : 56] And it's also called by its alternate name, Massah, which means testing. And the idea of testing is significant in this passage.

The previous two episodes of the Israelites grumbling against the Lord also involved a testing. In chapter 15, verse 25, at the bitter waters of Marah, after turning the water sweet, it said that the Lord made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them.

Likewise, in chapter 16, verse 4, after providing manna for the Israelites, God gave them instructions to gather only a day's portion each day so that he might test them.

But notice that Massah is not named after the Lord's testing of Israel. It's named after Israel's testing of the Lord. Moses says in verse 2, why do you test the Lord?

And it says in verse 7, Moses called the name of the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the Lord by saying, is the Lord among us or not?

[27 : 06] The script is flipped. It's no longer the Lord testing the Israelites, but the Israelites testing the Lord. They're saying, let's test the Lord to see if he is really with us or not.

Let's bring a charge against him. Make a demand of him, demand water from him to see if he will pass our test. See, that's a very arrogant and presumptuous thing that the Israelites are doing.

Usually it's the teacher that administers a test to the students. It's the employer who tests employees. It's the owner or potential owner that tests a product.

Because when you test something or someone, you're trying to see if it meets your standards. To see if the student has learned what he or she should have learned.

To see if the employee has performed to the employer's satisfaction. To see if the product meets the owner's expectations. There is a power dynamic at play.

[28 : 15] Yet the Israelites are so conceited and presumptuous that they test the Lord. Think about this. The Lord delivered them out of Egypt with signs and wonders.

The Lord split the Red Sea so that they crossed it in dry ground. The Lord turned the bitter waters of Marah into sweet waters for them to drink. The Lord rained manna and quail down from heaven for them to eat bread and meat in the middle of a desert.

And yet instead of waiting on the Lord and trusting in the Lord and saying, Hey, we're thirsty right now, but let's see how the Lord will provide for us this time.

Instead of waiting on the Lord, they have the gall to test the Lord. They're saying, Yahweh, come here over to our desk.

Here's a test that I've drawn out for you. We're going to see if you pass it. Be a good boy, okay? Let's see how you do. The impudence of the Israelites.

[29 : 25] Put it this way, it's easier to see how inappropriate this is. And yet this is what billions of people do to God every single day.

There's a famous C.S. Lewis essay entitled, God in the Dock. Dock, not as in a landing pier that boats come in and go from on a lake, but the dock of the courtroom, the place where a prisoner is placed during trial.

Lewis writes about how difficult it is for the modern world, in the modern world, to convince someone that he or she is a sinner. And he writes that instead of imagining himself to be the sinner in the dock on trial before God the judge, the modern man imagines himself to be the judge and puts God in the dock.

He says, quote, For the modern man, the roles are quite reversed. He is the judge. God is in the dock. He is quite a kindly judge.

If God should have a reasonable defense for being the God who permits war, poverty, and disease, he is ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God's acquittal. But the important thing is that man is on the bench and God is in the dock.

[30 : 47] From the Bible, we can see that this is not only the delusion of the modern man, it's the delusion of the ancient man as well. This is precisely what the Israelites are doing.

They have put God in the dock. Have you put God in the dock? Are you testing God to see if he can answer your philosophical objections?

Are you testing God to see if he can perform some miracles that will demonstrate to you that he is real? Are you testing God to see if he deserves your trust and allegiance?

You have heard the charges brought against you, God. What do you have to say for yourself? What do you have to say to defend yourself, God?

It is not our place to test the Lord God. There is one exception in Scripture, and I will digress for a minute.

[31 : 50] There is one exception in Scripture where the Lord actually invites us to test him. That's in Malachi chapter 3 verse 10, where the Lord accuses the Israelites of robbing from him because they were not bringing their full tithe, the 10% of their income to the Lord as an offering.

And he says to them this, Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts.

If I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. This is the one place in all of Scripture where the Lord invites us to test him.

Bring the full tithe to him and thereby put him to the test to see whether he will bless you and meet all your needs or not. Test me, says the Lord. But in all other instances where the Lord himself has not invited it, testing the Lord is the height of human hubris.

As Deuteronomy 6.16 commands, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test as you tested him at Massa. God is not in the dock. We are.

[33 : 07] God is the creator. We are not. God is the king. We are not. God is the judge. And we are not. God created us. And he sustains every atom of the universe by the word of his mouth.

The heavens declare the glory of God. And the sky above proclaims his handiwork. All creation testifies to the glory of God. To his eternal power and divine nature.

God is the king who rules over the universe. All creatures in heaven and earth bow before him. The birds of the air. The fish of the sea. The animals of the land. All humankind. All angels are accountable to him.

He is the lawgiver. And we are beholden to his laws. God will judge the living and the dead. He is the judge. He is the one to whom all mankind will give an account.

We are the ungrateful creatures who have lived for ourselves without reference to God our creator. We are the sinners sentenced to death.

[34 : 13] Certain of our guilty verdict. Being accused by the prosecutor. Satan awaiting the sentencing of the Lord our judge. We're the ones that have transgressed his laws and rebelled against his rule.

Psalms 95, 79 exhorts us in light of this event at Massa. Today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts as at Meribah.

As on that day at Massa in the wilderness. When your fathers put me to the test. And put me to the proof. Though they had seen my work. Though Israel had seen God's work in abundance.

They still tested the Lord to put him to the proof. And Hebrews 3 and 4 cites this psalm. Psalm 95 and tells us that it's because the Israelites chose to test the Lord.

That they failed to enter the rest of the Lord in Canaan. If you want to enter the eternal Sabbath rest of God. You must give up testing God.

[35 : 18] And you need to pass his test. But how can we pass God's test? We've all already grumbled against God.

We've all quarreled with him. We've all tested him and sinned against him. And for that we deserve God's swift judgment. We deserve death. We deserve eternal separation from him.

To be condemned. So what hope is there for us? Look at Exodus 17 verses 5 to 6. And the Lord said to Moses. Pass on before the people.

Taking with you some of the elders of Israel. And take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile. And go. Behold. I will stand before you there.

On the rock at Horeb. And you shall strike the rock. And water shall come out of it. And the people will drink.

[36 : 14] And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. Notice where God is while this is happening. He said I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb.

The Israelites are at Horeb. This highlights two different things. First the word Horeb comes from the Hebrew root that means dry or desolate. So this highlights the Lord's amazing provision.

He takes them to a desolate place and makes it flow with water for them. And then secondly Horeb if you recall. Is the same Horeb that was mentioned in Exodus 3 verse 1.

Where Moses was. Horeb the mountain of God. Where the Lord first revealed himself to Moses. In a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. So at Horeb once again. The Lord is revealing himself to his people.

And this time he is standing before them on the rock at Horeb. And while he is standing there on the rock. Look at what the Lord commands Moses to do. You shall strike the rock.

[37 : 17] And water shall come out of it. And the people will drink. Moses is instructed to strike the very rock. Upon which the Lord God himself is standing.

Apart from the Lord himself instructing him to do so. It's not something Moses or any sensible human being for that matter. Would have ever dared to do.

Because it comes so perilously close to striking the Lord himself. And that brings us to the important connection between the Lord and the rock.

Deuteronomy 32 verse 4 says the Lord is the rock. His work is perfect for all his ways are justice. Later in the same passage it says that the Lord suckled Israel with honey out of the rock.

And oil out of the flinty rock. And that he says he is the rock of salvation. The rock that bore Israel.

[38 : 20] In the tradition of the Old Testament. Yahweh is the rock. Or the everlasting rock. The rock of ages.

As it says in Isaiah 26 verse 4. So then in the same way that in Genesis 9 God set his bow in the cloud. The rainbow. But it's in Hebrew just the bow.

Like a bow that shoots an arrow. And when you look at the way the bow is hung up on the clouds. It's aimed at not earth but toward the heavens. It's a sign of the covenant.

That should his people fail to meet their end of the covenant. That he will not punish his people. But that God himself will bear the ultimate punishment. In the same way in Genesis 15.

When God appears to Abram. There are cut animals on either side. That Abram is supposed to walk through. Saying to himself if I break my covenant with you.

[39 : 19] I shall be like these torn pieces of animals. But instead of Abram. God appears in a smoking fire smoldering pot. And walks through the two pieces of the animal.

Saying if you fail to meet the covenant. I will pay for it. I will bear the punishment and guilt of your sin. So in the same place here.

It is not the Israelites who should be struck for their grumbling. God says strike the rock upon which I stand. And I will give you water from it.

This is exactly what Paul has in mind in 1 Corinthians 10. Verses 1 to 4. When he's describing Israel's journey through the Red Sea and the wilderness.

He writes. For I do not want you to be unaware brothers. That our fathers were all under the cloud. And all passed through the sea. And all were baptized into Moses. In the cloud and in the sea.

[40 : 13] And all ate the same spiritual food. And all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them. And the rock was Christ.

There's a Jewish rabbinical tradition. That says that this rock from Exodus 17. Followed them. And all the way through the wilderness.

And that it's the same rock that is struck in Numbers 20. Some people say that Moses actually physically carried this rock. That flowed with water throughout the wilderness. For as their water supply in the wilderness.

But that kind of speculation is not necessitated by the text in 1 Corinthians 10. Paul says clearly that he is speaking of the spiritual rock.

And he says explicitly that the rock was Christ. He's not concerned about the physical rock that flowed with water. Because the ultimate source of the provision of water is not the rock in and of itself.

[41 : 16] But it is the rock of ages. The rock of salvation. The Lord Yehovah himself. The rock of ages cleft for us.

The Lord himself who was struck for us. This is God's answer to Israel's test. Is the Lord among us or not?

And God's saying to them, Here I am. Here I am on the rock. I will be struck for you. And I will flow with living water that you might live.

And this is precisely what Jesus has in view when he offers the Samaritan woman the living water in John 4. This is exactly what Jesus has in view when the Israelites are celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles.

Which is a celebration of God's faithful provision for the Israelites throughout their time in the wilderness. That Jesus, he says in John 7, 37 to 39, says this. At the high day of the feast, the climax of the feast, he says this in public.

[42 : 25] If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

Now this, he said about the spirit whom those who believed in him were to receive. Whereas yet the spirit had not been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Jesus is not being demure here. He's making the connection very obvious. God, the rock, provided water for them in the wilderness. And Jesus now says, come to me and drink.

He's saying, I am the rock who was struck in your place so that you might drink this living water that wells up to eternal life. Christ died on the cross to bear the punishment for our sins.

So that we might drink of the living water of the spirit and dwell forever with God. So if you recall when at John 19, verse 34, after Christ's death, one of the soldiers pierces his side to ensure that he is dead.

[43 : 32] What comes out of his side? Blood on the one hand, which is for the atoning of our sins, forgiveness for our sins. And water, signifying the living water of the spirit.

This is what people call, theologians call, this is what the song, Rock of Ages, that we sing sometimes calls the double cure. The water and the blood.

The blood that justifies us and the water that washes us and sanctifies us. Rock of Ages, cleft for me.

Let me hide myself in thee. Let the water and the blood from thy wounded side which flowed be of sin the double cure.

Save from wrath and make me pure. So let us hide ourselves in Christ and drink of the living water that flows from the rock of Christ.

[44 : 37] Let us not test the Lord, but let us trust in him instead, knowing and remembering the rock of ages that was struck down to give us living water.

Let's pray. Lord, how kind and patient and merciful of you, Lord.

Lord, how kind and merciful of you, Lord.

We trust you, Lord. We know you are good. We know your steadfast love. We know your faithfulness.

Help us to remember it every single day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.