

# TWO ROCKS

## PART I

### Significance of Moses' Action in Exodus, Numbers

By Arlen L. Chitwood

“Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, 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” (Ex. 17:6).

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, 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 thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts to drink.

And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also” (Num. 20:7, 8, 11).

There are *TWO accounts* in Scripture of Moses striking rocks with his rod, with water coming out each time. *ONE* occurred near *the beginning* of his ministry (during the first year), and *the OTHER* occurred near *the end* of his ministry (either very near or during the last year, the fortieth year).

Moses had been commanded *to strike* the first rock, *BUT NOT so* with the second rock years later. Rather, Moses had been commanded *to speak* to this rock, and it would give forth water.

*BUT* Moses, in a rebellious act, after he had gathered the congregation together, *struck* the rock twice rather than *speaking* to it.

*Nevertheless, even though he had struck the rock (NOT once, BUT twice), in direct disobedience to God's command, water still issued forth; and it issued forth abundantly.*

*BUT*, though God supplied water from the rock after this fashion, in spite of that which Moses had done, his act of disobedience would carry *grave consequences*.

Moses, because of *the gravity* of that which had been done, *would NOT be allowed to lead the Israelites into the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. In fact, Moses *would NOT even be allowed to enter this land*, though he would be allowed *to see* it from a distance before he died (Num. 20:8-12; 27:12-14; Deut. 34:1-5).

These two incidents — one occurring near *the beginning* of Moses' ministry, and the other occurring near *the end* of his ministry — point to two parallel incidents occurring in the history of Israel, during the 1,500 years extending from Moses to Christ.

The first, associated with Moses striking the first rock, occurred at *the beginning* of God's dealings with the nation; and the second, associated with Moses striking the second rock, occurred near *the end* of God's dealings with the nation, prior to His setting the nation aside to take out of the Gentiles “a people for his name” (Acts 15:14).

Then, God's future dealings with Israel in this same respect can be seen in His subsequent dealings with the nation under Joshua, following Moses' death. But even though this lies beyond the experiences of Moses — the entrance of the Israelites into the land under Joshua, typifying their future entrance into the land under Jesus (Heb. 4:8) — this was still a major subject within that which Moses had written.

And *NOT ONLY* was it a major subject dealt with by Moses, *BUT* by the Prophets which followed as well.

The entire Old Testament, beginning with Moses, is simply *one continuous revelation detailing ALL the various facets of the person and work of Christ — past, present, and future*. And all the various facets of His complete dealings with both Israel and the Church can be seen within this revelation.

*It was ALL set forth in Moses and the Prophets FIRST*. And if a person desires to understand that part of God's revelation lying beyond Moses and the Prophets — the New Testament — he will have to continually reference the Old.

And the converse of that is equally true.

*NOT ONLY* does the Old Testament provide light for and help explain the New, *BUT* many things have been opened up in the New (invariably, after some fashion, through Old Testament revelation) which also help explain things in the Old.

*One Testament HAS TO BE studied and understood in the light of the other. Scripture HAS TO BE compared with Scripture. One part of Scripture HAS TO BE understood in the light of another part or other parts of Scripture.*

*And continual review after this fashion, under the leadership of the indwelling Holy Spirit, is the price one must pay for a knowledge of the Word of God.*

### Two Inseparably Related Types

According to I Cor. 10:4, the first rock which Moses struck, with water flowing out, typified *Christ*; and it *could ONLY have typified Christ being struck, crucified*.

In this respect, the striking of the rock in Ex. 17:6 *could ONLY* have reflected back on that which had previously occurred in Egypt — the decreed death of the firstborn, and the institution of the Passover.

It had to do with *the paschal lambs being struck in the place of the firstborn in the family*. It had to do with *a vicarious striking, a vicarious death*.

Thus, both the striking of this rock in the wilderness and the prior death of the paschal lambs in Egypt pointed to and typified *the Paschal Lamb being struck almost 1,500 years later, at Christ's first coming*.

At this time, the Paschal Lamb was slain by Israel, as the nation had slain the paschal lambs during Moses' day, or as Moses had subsequently struck the rock.

Then, water flowing out when the rock was struck, with the people drinking from the smitten rock simply formed a continuing picture of the previous type — the blood being applied and the lambs being eaten following the paschal lambs being slain, being struck (cf. Ex. 12:8-11; John 6:53-56; I Cor. 5:7, 8).

## A Complete Work in the Antitype

Placing the two types together (Ex. 12, 17), there was a literal application of the blood, an eating, and a drinking (with spiritual implications also seen [I Cor. 10:4]); and these types together foreshadowed an application of the blood (through believing) and a spiritual eating and drinking in the antitype.

And the same thought of eating is seen in a corresponding type, pointing to the same antitype — a literal eating of manna in the type, pointing to a spiritual eating in the antitype (Ex. 16:14ff).

And whether the type is drawn from applying the blood, eating of the paschal lambs, eating of the manna, or drinking from the rock, one overall picture can be seen in the antitype.

Following the application of the blood, rather than a literal eating of the Living Word (an impossibility), there is a spiritual eating and drinking — an assimilation of *the written Word* (rather than this same Word made flesh), which is itself *living*.

Then, drinking His blood, as seen in John 6:53-56, *can ONLY be* a reference to another facet of the same thing. It is the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin (I John 1:7); and note an allusion to this in John 15:3, connected with Christ's words.

Christ, speaking to His disciples, stated, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." The reference was back to His statement in verse two, and more specifically to the word "purgeth." The words in the Greek text translated "purgeth" (v. 2 [*kathairo*]) and "clean" (v. 3 [*katharos*]) are cognate words, carrying the same basic meaning — "clean," or "cleanse" (the word "catharsis" is an Anglicized form of the Greek word *katharos*). Verse two has to do with cleansing through cutting off the dross, through purging; and verse three refers back to this cleansing.

Drinking Christ's blood would have reference to the Word in the preceding respect. It is the Word which relates the power and capabilities of *the ONLY thing which can cleanse from sin — the blood of Christ* on the mercy seat in the heavenly sanctuary (I John 1:7-2:2).

Accordingly, the reference, as it would relate to Christians today, *could ONLY be to Christ's high priestly ministry in the sanctuary on behalf of those redeemed through His finished work at Calvary* (cf. John 13:5-12).

Thus, whether eating the slain lambs, eating the manna, drinking from the rock, or drinking Christ's blood in John 6:53-56, *ONLY* the saved can be in view.

An individual in the type had to first avail himself of that made possible through a slain lamb and shed blood (properly applying that blood) before he could assimilate the lamb. *And it is the SAME in the antitype*.

Further, unsaved individuals *CANNOT* act in the spiritual realm. They are spiritually dead, separated from the Spirit to lead them "into all truth" (John 16:13), and completely incapable of acting in this realm.

And this is the reason that the Word of God is "foolishness" to them (I Cor. 2:14). Any attempt by the unsaved to understand the Word of God or to act in the spiritual realm, in any capacity, *is NOTHING more* than the natural seeking to discern or to act within that which is spiritual, completely apart from the guidance which God has provided for the saved through His Holy Spirit.

It would be impossible for an unsaved person to eat of the slain Lamb, drink from the smitten Rock, or drink the blood of the slain Lamb and remain within the symbolism seen through these acts. All of this lies within the spiritual realm — type or antitype.

*The eating and drinking, as previously stated, can ONLY follow the appropriation of the blood (type or antitype).*

These experiences in the antitype *can ONLY refer*:

- 1) To saved individuals availing themselves of the written Word (for spiritual nourishment — an eating of the Lamb, an eating of the Manna, and a drinking from the Rock).
- 2) To saved individuals availing themselves of the Word in the sense of John 15:3 (which, relative to sin in the life of a believer, *can ONLY* have to do with Christ's high priestly ministry and His blood on the mercy seat).

Thus, Moses striking the rock in Exodus chapter seventeen *can ONLY be* a reference back to the death of the paschal lambs in Egypt and the application of the blood of these lambs (Ex. 12:6,7). And the water flowing out of the rock moves beyond the slaying of the paschal lambs and the application of the blood. It parallels the subsequent eating of these lambs in Ex. 12:8-11.

*BUT*, what about the rock in Numbers? *It was NOT to be struck. Rather, this rock was to be spoken to.* And, even though it was struck, water *STILL* issued forth; and it issued forth *abundantly*.

To what aspect of the person and work of Christ does the striking of this rock speak? *It CAN'T speak* of the same thing as the first rock, for this second rock *was NOT to be struck. BUT*, even though it doesn't speak of the same thing, water still issued forth when this rock was struck — something which would reflect back on that seen through the first rock being struck.

*BUT STILL, it's the second rock being struck, NOT the first. And, again, this rock was NOT to be struck.*

Studying the striking of these two rocks in the light of that which occurred at Calvary some 1,500 years later, the entire matter becomes clear. Moses struck two rocks in the type, showing *TWO different facets of the type*; and the Israelites struck one Rock (Christ) in the antitype, wherein *BOTH facets of the type can be seen*.

Viewing the entire matter together after this fashion — the striking of both rocks by Moses in the wilderness, and the striking of the one Rock by the Israelites at Calvary — there are probably no other parts of Old Testament revelation which better clarify *a particular aspect of that which occurred at Calvary*.

And the converse of that is equally true. These same events surrounding Calvary will, in turn, help explain the various things surrounding Moses striking the two rocks. *ONLY* through studying them together — the Old Testament types and the New Testament antitype — can the complete picture be seen in all its clarity and fullness.