



**M**OREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. (1 Cor 10:1-4)

Great rocks have always represented strength and security. Guarding the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea stands a great Rock whose prominence dominates the landscapes for sea vessels approaching her domain. This great Rock, from antiquity past, has been known as the Rock of Gibraltar. The strait over which it stands guard is named after it, as if it were the offspring of that great Rock.

There are great cathedrals whose primary construction is granite stone. Such cathedrals dominate the landscape of England and Continental Europe. They have stood, unmoved, for centuries. There are other strong buildings composed of stone which have similar characteristics, but opposite purposes - the prison, and the fortress. The prison walls are made strong to keep her inhabitants from escaping; but the fortress is made strong to prevent the enemy from entering. There is a metaphoric comparison to be made to the soul of man – the lost soul being imprisoned by sin and lust, while the saint of God is securely held in the Great Fortress which is God – secure from all enemy approaches. The great Martin Luther, in his hymn, praised that Mighty Fortress his lines:

A mighty fortress is our God,  
a bulwark never failing;  
our helper he, amid the flood  
of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
does seek to work us woe;  
his craft and power are great,  
and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth is not his equal.

There are shades and shadows of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the Old and New Testament. There are a number which reveal His Person, metaphorically, as a Rock. Our leading text above does so directly. It doesn't mean that our Lord is a physical rock because that would be too small and weak; but He is compared to a great Rock of salvation and security to His people.

He is represented at the Mountain of God (Horeb) which stands just before Sinai. It was at Mount Horeb where the Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the Burning Bush: *2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. 3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. 5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. (Ex 3:2-6)*

Mount Horeb can be considered the Mountain of Mercy since God allowed gushing waters to stream out from the stricken Rock there to quench the thirst of a murmuring band of Israelites. *1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? 3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? 4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. 5 And the LORD said unto Moses, 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. 6 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. 7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not? (Ex 17:1-7)*

Of course, it might be deduced from this passage that we always find Living Waters when we depart from the Wilderness of Sin and seek the Mountain of Mercy.

Here is a quote taken from the great Matthew Henry's Commentary: *To dissuade the Corinthians from communion with idolaters, and security in any sinful course, the apostle sets before them the example of the Jewish nation of old. They were, by a miracle, led through the Red Sea, where the pursuing Egyptians were drowned. It was to them a typical baptism. The manna on which they fed was a type of Christ crucified, the Bread which came down from heaven, which whoso eateth shall live for ever. Christ is the Rock on which the Christian church is built; and of the streams that issue therefrom, all believers drink, and are refreshed. It typified the sacred influences of the Holy Spirit, as given to believers through Christ. But let none presume upon their great privileges, or profession of the truth; these will not secure heavenly happiness.*

If a child bears the inherited features of the parents, should not the Christian bear the features of his father and His God? When proclaiming Simon to be Peter (Petros) our Lord was naming him as a follower which would bear the identifying features of a descendent of His own Father since our Lord and God the Father are One. By the same token, if we are One with the Son, we must, by virtue of that relationship, be One with the Father and bear His likeness and image. Peter (Petros) means a stone, not a great rock;

but the Rock (Petras) referred to Christ in 1 Corinthians 10:4 means a great Rock or crag of a mountain. Christ is the Rock, and we are chips of that Rock. Even a chip from the great granite Crag still bears the physical properties of the Rock from which it was hewn. So should we bear likeness to our Lord and Savior though in far lesser measure.

Christ was the Rock of the Pillar of Fire by Night and Cloud by Day that both led and followed Israel in the wilderness. He was forever both defender and guide to the Old Testament Church just as He is the defender and guide to us of the New Testament Church. He is the place of security just as the Ark was the place of security for Noah and his family. Christ is our Ark today the door of which no man can open or close save the Lord. The more treacherous the storms of life become below, the higher our Ark (Jesus Christ) lifts us above the fray.

We are very much like God's eagles as His elect: *27 Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? 28 She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.* (Job 39:27-28) The safe place is not in the Wilderness of Sin, but high upon the Mountain of Mercy in the Crag of the Rock.

A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,  
A wonderful Savior to me;  
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,  
(He is that Rock)  
Where RIVERS of pleasure I see.  
(He is the Water of Life)

**T**HE LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. (Psalm 18:2)

He hideth my soul in the cleft of the Rock  
That shadows a dry, thirsty land;  
(That Rock stands Sovereign over the Wilderness of Sin)  
He hideth my soul in the depths of His love,  
(such depth as cannot be fathomed)  
And covers me there with His hand,  
(such a hand as is worn with the Carpenter's labors and pierced with  
nine-inch roman nails)  
And covers me there with His hand.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: *11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* (2 Peter 1:10-11) Have you done this?