

Series: Exodus: Provision in the Wilderness

Sermon: The LORD Our Rock

Scripture: Exodus 17:1-7 (ESV)

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Exodus 17:1-7 (ESV)

¹ *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.*

² *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?"*

³ *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?"*

⁴ *So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."*

⁵ *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.*

⁶ *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.*

⁷ *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?"*

I. What kind of people are the Israelites? A rebellious and hard-hearted one. (1-4, 7)

II. What kind of God is the LORD? The Rock of who is present to save even sinners like us. (5-7)

"It was for this world that Christ died; [and] the more evil you saw and heard about you, the greater glory lay around the death. It was too easy to die for what was good or beautiful...[this world] needed a God to die for the half-hearted and the corrupt."

(Graham Greene, *The Power and the Glory*, 97)

1 Corinthians 10:4b (ESV)

... they drank from the Rock that followed them and the Rock was Christ.

John 7:37-38 (ESV)

If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me ... "Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

"Before God gave His covenant at Sinai, He pledged His presence at Calvary."

(Ed Clowney, *The Unfolding Mystery*, 126)

"There is more mercy in Christ than there is sin in us." (Richard Sibbes, *The Bruised Reed*, 13)

“God is on the Bathroom Floor,” by Nightbirde. (<https://www.nightbirde.co/>):

Call me bitter if you want to – that’s fair. Count me among the angry, the cynical, the offended, the hardened. But count me also among the friends of God. For I have seen Him in rare form. I have felt His exhale, laid in His shadow, squinted to read the message He wrote for me in the [bathroom] grout: ‘I’m sad too.’

...I remind myself that I’m praying to the God who let the Israelites stay lost for decades. They begged to arrive in the Promised Land, but instead He let them wander, answering prayers they didn’t pray. For forty years, their shoes didn’t wear out. Fire lit their path each night. Every morning, He sent them mercy-bread from heaven.

I look hard for the answers to the prayers that I didn’t pray. I look for the mercy-bread that He promised to bake fresh for me each morning. The Israelites called it manna, which means “what is it?”

That’s the same question I’m asking—again, and again. There’s mercy here somewhere—but what is it? What is it? What is it?

I see mercy in the dusty sunlight that outlines the trees, in my mother’s crooked hands, in the blanket my friend left for me, in the harmony of the wind chimes. It’s not the mercy that I asked for, but it is mercy nonetheless. And I learn a new prayer: thank you. It’s a prayer I don’t mean yet, but will repeat until I do.

Call me cursed, call me lost, call me scorned. But that’s not all. Call me chosen, blessed, sought-after. Call me the one who God whispers his secrets to. I am the one whose belly is filled with loaves of mercy that were hidden for me.

Even on days when I’m not so sick, sometimes I go lay on the mat in the afternoon light to listen for Him. I know it sounds crazy, and I can’t really explain it, but God is in there—even now. I have heard it said that some people can’t see God because they won’t look low enough, and it’s true. Look lower. God is on the bathroom floor.