

The Rock

5-12-13

In Matthew 16:16-19 Jesus said to Peter that *"on this rock I will build My church"*. From a quick study of the Bible we can understand that Jesus did not mean Peter (Jesus gave the other apostles the same authority in Matthew 18). In fact, the Bible gives us a clear answer on this in I Corinthians 10:4: *"and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."* The Old Testament repeats this motif again and again; for example, *"The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted"* (Psalm 18:46).

Perhaps there is still more to the idea of the Rock that the church is built on. Consider this rock of the Old Testament: *"Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals."* (Numbers 20:8). This is specifically the rock which Paul referenced when he said that the Rock was Christ. Jesus said *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."* (John 7:38). As the rock was spoken to (and later struck), it bore out water. So too is the rock on which the church is born; it reveals to us living waters by which we can be sustained.

Yet there is even one more rock worth considering. It was mentioned twice, once with Moses, and once with Elijah, the two men who appeared with Jesus at the mount of transfiguration. It was on Mt. Sinai that this rock was mentioned. God said to Moses: *"So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by."* (Exodus 33:22). Pertaining to Elijah: *And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"* (1 Kings 19:9). Here too was a rock, one which hid these men before God. Is this too not like Jesus, who is our intercessor between God and us? *Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.* (Hebrews 7:25)

Simply Put: Jesus is the Rock. He is the source of the Living Waters that sustain us while we are pilgrims sojourning on the earth. He is the place and being of intercession before God, the cleft where we are hidden and safe.

One more rock: Matthew 7:24-29. Here Jesus says that we must build upon the rock to be saved. Jesus said this was done by obeying the sayings he has given to us. Will you?