

Numbers 20:2-13 **Waters of Meribah**

² Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron.

³ And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying: "If only we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! ⁴ Why have you brought up the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? ⁵ And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink." ⁶ So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them.

⁷ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁸ "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." ⁹ So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. ¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" ¹¹ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.

¹² Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." ¹³ This was the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the LORD, and He was hallowed among them. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

- ✧ Meribah means contention or strife.
 - ◇ The first problem with water was at the bitter waters of Marah. [\[Exodus 15:22-27\]](#)
 - ◇ Two locations of contention and strife over the water supply: one was at Rephidim near Mount Sinai (Horeb) which was called Massah and Meribah. [\[Exodus 17:1-7\]](#)
 - ◇ The other in Kadesh near the border of the Promised Land, where they refused to enter because of the report of the ten spies who gave an unfavorable report which cost them 40 years wandering in the wilderness, and where Miriam died. [\[Numbers 20:1-13\]](#)
- ✧ Their complaint had a familiar refrain, indicating a normal human lack of faith in God and lack of hope for the future.
 - ◇ They know that they will spend 40 years in the wilderness until all that generation has died according to the command of God. [\[Numbers 14:26-35\]](#)
 - ◇ They wish they had died with their brethren before Yehowah: This is a reference to those who had died as a result of the rebellion of Korah [\[Numbers 16:1-35\]](#) and the rebellion of the people of Israel. [\[Numbers 16:41-50\]](#)
 - ◇ Sudden death is preferable to the miseries of a long drawn out death of wasting away in the wilderness for 40 years.
 - ◇ They know now that they will never see the Promised Land because that entire generation will die in the wilderness.
- ✧ Moses and Aaron went from the congregation to the door of the Tabernacle and fell on their faces.
- ✧ The Glory of Yehowah appeared to them as God allows the people to witness His presence.
- ✧ God commanded Moses to take the rod and Aaron, to gather the congregation before the rock, to **speak to the rock** and water will be provided for the people.

- ✧ The Rock was God's provision for the people in Christ Jesus, Who was at that time God the Word, the rock that followed them. [[1 Corinthians 10:4](#), [John 1:1-5](#)]
- ✧ Striking the rock at Rephidim represented the abuse Jesus bore for the sins of the world, as He provided the sacrifice that covers sin for all time, He only needed to suffer and die once for all time.
- ✧ After that we need only to speak to Christ the Rock and God hears our prayers and supplies our needs. We dare not crucify Christ again by our falling away after we have known the truth. [[Hebrews 6:1-6](#)]
- ✧ By disobeying God and striking the rock along with his remarks of anger against the people, Moses failed a great opportunity to glorify God, by simply speaking to the rock and it would have produced water in abundance.
- ✧ Instead of Hallowing God before the people, Moses said; "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" Thereby he did not give God the credit for the water supply.
- ✧ God did provide water from the rock for the people, but He held Moses and Aaron accountable for their act.
- ✧ This act of anger and failure to hallow God in the sight of the Children of Israel cost Moses and Aaron the right to enter the Promised Land.
- ✧ The place was called to the waters of Meribah at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin because there they contended with God through Moses and Aaron. [[Numbers 20:13](#), [27:12-14](#), [Deuteronomy 32:48-52](#)]