

## **201111-4 Nu 20, Twice Smiting the Rock & Edom Denies Passage–CThurman**

It appears that the history of Israel has now fast-forwarded about 38 years, to the fortieth year of Israel's sojourn (Deu.2.14; Nu.33.38), near to the time when the next generation of Israel should come to possess the land of Canaan. They have come back to Kadesh, a place that shall become an historical locale because a number of significant events occur here.

*Kadesh, קִדְשׁ, qa-dash or קִדְשׁ, qa-dehsh, means to be holy, sanctified, devoted, or consecrated.*

It was at this place Israel refused to enter into the land of Canaan. Here was Korah's rebellion (cf. Nu. ch.16). Here Miriam will die (ibid. Nu.20.1). Moses will smite the rock (ibid. 20.8-12). Here Israel will send messengers to Edom requesting passage through their land (ibid. 20.14). And finally, Kadesh becomes the southernmost border to the land of Israel land during the millennial kingdom (cf. Ez.47.19; 48.28)

The LORD brought Israel back full circle to Kadesh; a place where they originally rejected taking possession of the land of Canaan. (Nu.13.21, 26, evidently the wilderness of Zin is the southernmost area just before entering into Canaan; 20.1) In one sense of the word, the LORD has raised up a whole new generation in preparation for entering into the land of promise.

*Nu.26.64 But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai.*

*65 For the LORD had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.*

If the LORD has been working in our lives we are not the same persons we were in the beginning of our Christian sojourn. But in another sense, as the LORD brought Israel full circle to deal with where they had deviated from the will of God, so it seems to be for us.

**1 ¶ Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.**

*Miriam*, מִרְיָם, Mir-yam, and appears to be related to the verb מָרָה, ma-rah, *to rebel, to disobey, to be bitter, to provoke.*

Miriam evidently died in the first month; Aaron in the 5<sup>th</sup> month. And Moses sometime after Aaron. All died within the space of a year. (cf. Nu.20.28; 33.28; Deu. 2.14; 34.7, Aaron was 3 years older than Moses [Ex.7.7])

**2 And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.**

*gathered themselves together*, וַיִּקְהֻלוּ, Niphal (simple pass.) fut. of קָהַל, *to gather or assemble themselves together; Nu.16.3; 20.2.*

**3 And the people chode with Moses, and spake,**

*chode*, וַיִּרְבּוּ, Qal fut. 3psm. of the verb רָיַב, rēv, tss. *to strive, to plead, to contend, to debate, to rebuke*, and once as a noun, *adversaries* (1Sa.2.10)

**saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD!**

In other words, we wish we had died before now sometime during the sojourn as those brethren before us. It seems to be that the sins of the parents are brought forward into the children. Like the parents before them, not the children take up the familiar complaints.

**4 And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?**

animals, livestock

*beasts*, בְּעִירָם, b<sup>e</sup>-[g]ee-ram, a masc. sing. noun of בְּעִיר, b<sup>e</sup>-geer, tss. *beast* (4), *cattle* (2); probably refers to any kind of livestock as generic as our word for *animals* (horses, camels, cattle [bulls and cows], kine, sheep, goats).

**5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt,**

*have ye made us to come up*, הֶעֱלִיתָנוּ, Hiphil (causative act.) pret. of עָלָה, [g]a-lah, togo up, ascend.

***to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.***

All the places to which Israel came was of the Lord. Where the cloud and fiery pillar led them was where they went, and where it rested the place they set up camp.

*Ex 40:36 And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys:*

*37 But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.*

*38 For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.*

*Nu.9.16 So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.*

*17 And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.*

*18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.*

So, Israel was displeased with the LORD's will for them there.

**6 And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.**

The cloud was resting upon the tabernacle already. The appearance of the glory of the LORD seems to indicate special, additional apparition, appearance.

**7 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,  
8 Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes;**

First, I cannot say for sure (cf. v.9), but that Moses had a rod of his own which was also put up before the Lord as Aaron's was. Remember, Aaron's rod was kept before in the tabernacle before the ark of the testimony, and was later placed inside of it. (cf. Nu.17.10; He.9.4)

Second, notice the plural *ye*, 'speak ye'. Moses addressed the children of Israel through his brother Aaron.

*Ex.4.16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.*

*17 And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.*

**and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock:**

*rock, שֵׁלַח, she-la[g], a masc. noun tss. rock (oft), ragged rocks (1), strong hold (1), and once as an adj. stony (places); the place bearing this name is Selah or Sela.*

**so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.**

animals

So, by Moses and Aaron speaking to the rock the LORD would give water sufficient to satisfy both the congregation and the animals.

**9 And 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 unto them, Hear now, ye rebels;**  
disobeying, provoking

*rebels, המורים, Qal part. poel of מרה, mah-rah, tss. to rebel, disobey, to be bitter, to provoke, to change (my judgments), and as nouns, rebel (Nu.20.10), provocation (Job 17.2); v.24; see also v.11 (citing Ps.106.33).*

**must we fetch you water out of this rock?**

*we fetch, נו ציא, no-tzee-a, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of יציא, tss. to go forth, to proceed, to come out, to go out, to go abroad, to depart, to issue out, to bring out, to take out, to pluck out, to carry forth, to fetch out, to lead out.*

Both Moses and Aaron are agreed in their sentiment toward Israel. Whether there is agreement or disagreement between brethren the important point is obedience. Moses and Aaron might have found some comfort while they set out to do what they will, but not only was that short-lived, the result will be for them a very bitter pill to swallow.

**11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice:**

*lifted up, ירם, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of רום, room, tss. to lift up, to mount up, to be lofty, to exalt, to set up, to be loud, to be heaved, to promote.*

*he smote, יך, ya-k<sup>e</sup>, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of נכה, na-kah, tss. to smite, to slay, to kill, to beat.*

I don't know why twice. Perhaps smiting the rock twice was once for each of them. The number two can represent the resolve they had to do this.

*Ge 41:32 And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.*

*Job 40:5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.*

**and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank,**  
- much water came out -

**and their beasts also.**  
animals

At this the LORD supplied the abundance of water promised, but there was a consequence for this act of rebellion. (Nu.27.14, called a rebellion; Deu.33.51, a trespass)

*Ps 106:32 They (the congregation of Israel) angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:*

*that it went ill, יָרַע, Qal fut. verb tss. to grieve, to displease, to go ill, to be evil, to do harm.*

*for their sakes, בְּעֵבוּרָם, see עֵבוּר, [g]<sup>a</sup>-voor, for ... sake, because of.*

*33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.*

*because they provoked, כִּי, בִּיְהִמְרוּ, kee (because), הִמְרוּ, him-roo, Hiphil (causative act.) pret. of מָרָה, marah, verb tss. to rebel, disobey, to [em]bitter, to provoke; cf. v.10, Hear now, ye rebels ...*

He.12.14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness,  
without which no man shall see the Lord:  
15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace  
of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up  
trouble you, and thereby many be defiled ...

so that he spake unadvisedly, וַיִּבְטֵא, Piel (intensive act.)  
fut. verb of בָּטֵא, and only four times in the OT, tss. to  
speak, to pronounce (Le.5.4, twice), & to speak  
unadvisedly; to speak unadvisedly refers to how Moses  
spoke; he spoke rashly or without due consideration.

with his lips, בְּשִׂפְתָיו, see the fem. noun שִׂפָּה, sa-phah,  
tss. language, speech, brink, bank, border, band, lips,  
brim, talk.

It is easier not to say the words, than it is to live  
them down. Once spoken they are unretrievable.

Pr 10:19 In the multitude of words there  
wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his  
lips is wise.

refraineth, a Qal part. of חָשַׁךְ,  
cha-sak, tss. to withhold, to  
keep, to reserve, to refrain, to  
spare, to forbear, to assuage.

**12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not,**  
established  
brought me not up  
set me not up

you believed, הֵאֱמַנְתֶּם, he<sup>e</sup>-man-tem, Hiphil (causative act.) pret. of  
אָמַן, ah-man, tss. to nurse, to bring up, to be faithful, to be

*established, to be sure, to verify, to long continue, to be trusty, to stand fast, to believe.*

Now, theirs was a terrible sin. It was an act. It was a bad act. But it was not a manner of life. Moses is mentioned for his faith in Hebrews, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter. (cf. He.11.23-29)

***to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel,***  
hallow

*to sanctify me, לְהַקְדִּישֵׁנִי, l<sup>e</sup>-haq-dee-shay-nee, of a Hiphil (causative act.) inf. of קָדַשׁ, qa-dash, tss. to hallow, to be holy, to sanctify, to consecrate, to prepare, to appoint, to dedicate, to keep, to purify.*

***therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.***

The LORD said that neither of them, neither Moses nor Aaron shall bring the nation of Israel into the land of Canaan when the time comes.

They publicly disgraced the LORD. Moses and Aaron were servants of the LORD and not men. Their work was to do the will of the LORD no matter what men, no matter what other *brethren* do. Their standard was not other men, but the word of the LORD. For this act the LORD rejects them leading the people into the land of Canaan.

Our standard is not how others act and what others do. Our only standard is the word of God.

***13 This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them.***

*strove, רָבּוּ, Qal pret. of the verb רָבַב, (cf. v.3).*

*and he was sanctified, a Niphal (simple pass.) fut. of קָדַשׁ or קִדְּשׁ.*

For Meribah see Ex.17.7.

Paul says that the Rock followed them. In the beginning of their sojourn it was at Horeb where Moses smote the rock. And it was at the end when he should have spoken to it.

*1Co.10.1 ¶ Moreover, 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.*

In spite of what Moses and Aaron did, the LORD was still sanctified before Israel. In spite of their sin the LORD kept His word to Israel.

**14 ¶ And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us:**  
trouble

*travail, תַּלְאָה, fem. sing. noun of תַּלְאָה, t<sup>e</sup>-la-ah, tss. travail (3) (some versions might sp. travel [cf. Nu.20.14; Lam. 3.5], trouble (1); only 4 times in the OT (Ex.18.8; Nu.20.14; Neh. 9.32; Lam.3.5)*

**15 How our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time;**

Israel was in Egypt for 210 years. (cf. Exodus Study, chs.1-4, pp. 10, 11 [charts], 30, 64,65, 96)

**and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers:**

**16 And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border:**

uttermost of, קִצְּהוּ, q<sup>e</sup>-tzeyh, masc. noun קִצְּהוּ, tss. *after the end, a quarter, the edge, the border, the brink, in the brim, the uttermost of, the uttermost part, the outside of.*

thy border, גְּבוּלְךָ, g<sup>e</sup>-vu-le-ka, of the masc. noun גְּבוּל, G<sup>e</sup>-vool, tss. *a border, the bouds, a quarter, a landmark a space, a limit; v.17.*

Kadesh probably being to the west of Edom.

**17 Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country:**

*let us pass, נַעֲבֹרְךָ, na[g]-b<sup>e</sup>rah, Qal fut. of עָבַר, [g]a-var, tss. to pass, to come, to pass over, to pass through, to come over, to go over, to transgress, to pass alone, let us pass, etc.*

***we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's [high] way,***

*king, הַמֶּלֶךְ, lit. the king's*

*way, דֶּרֶךְ, de'-rek, common noun tss. a way of, the manner of, a journey.*

***we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.***

**18 And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.**

At this time and place Edom does will not allow Israel to pass through their land. First of all, there is nothing suggesting that the LORD directed Moses to seek passage through Edom at this time. Later, the Lord will direct him direct him to the place, and tell him how and where to go up. (cf. Deu.2.4-8)

**19 And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the high way: causeway**

high way, מְסִלָּה, bam-sil-lah, fem. noun מְסִלָּה, m<sup>e</sup>-sil-lah, tss. *an high, a course, an highway, a causeway, the terraces, a path.*

**and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it:  
give their price**

*give*, the verb, a Qal pret. of נָתַן, na-than, *to give, to deliver, to set,* etc.

*pay* (price), מִכְרָם, mik-ram, Qal infin. of מָכַר, me-kehr tss. Nu.20.19, *to pay*; Neh.13.16, *a ware*; Pv.31.10, *a price*; the verb , מָכַר, ma-kar, is always tss. *to sell.*

***I will only, without doing any thing else, go through on my feet.***

Seems like Moses is simply trying to assure Edom that Israel has no other intention but to pass through the land to get to their own in the most direct route possible.

***20 And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand.***

***21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.***

***22 ¶ And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto mount Hor.***

Hor thought to be an archaic form for the Hebrew הָר, a mountain. And so, literally, as the order of the words occur in the Hebrew, means, the mountain of mountains.

***23 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying,***

***24 Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye***

[both, Moses and Aaron]



**28 And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his clothed, v.26**

**son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount:**

*Deu.10.6 And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.*

*Deu.33.38 And Aaron the priest went up into mount Hor at the commandment of the LORD, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month.*

*39 And Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in mount Hor.*

**and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.**

Aaron was buried immediately.

**29 And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.**

*mourned, וַיִּבְכּוּ, vay-yiv-koo, Qal fut. of בָּכָה, ba-kah, tss. to weep, to bewail, to mourn; used as a place-name, Bochim (Jud.2.1).*

The high priest now is Eleazar. The office of the high priest passed on to another. Aaron was stripped of his high priestly garments and his successor was clothed in them. Then Aaron died. But Christ's office as high priest after the order of Melchisedec doesn't pass on to anyone because he lives for ever.

*He.7.23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:*

*24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.*

The fortieth year of Israel's sojourn begins with the death of Miriam and ends with the death of Moses. Miriam, appears to have died sometime in the first month. (cf. Nu.20.1) Aaron died about four months after Miriam. (1<sup>st</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month, Nu.33.38) And Moses, he will die within the next 6 ½ months. (Consider that there will be 30 days mourning. [cf.Deu.34.8]; and they will observe Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month pushes the time back to at least the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> month. Israel crosses Jordan on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month.