

God Is An Everlasting Rock

Rev. 6:15-16 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

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Forward

God alone is our rock. In the Old Testament rocks were quite significant. In the wilderness during the sudden storms in the Middle East shepherds and sojourners would often nestle under a large rock for shelter. God is the rock of our salvation.

A shelter in the time of storm

By Vernon J Charlesworth 1885

The Lord's our Rock, in Him we hide,
A Shelter in the time of storm;
Secure whatever ill betide,
A Shelter in the time of storm.

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Refrain:

Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,
A weary land, a weary land;
Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land,
A Shelter in the time of storm.

A shade by day, defense by night,
A Shelter in the time of storm;
No fears alarm, no foes afright,
A Shelter in the time of storm.

The raging storms may round us beat,
A Shelter in the time of storm;
We'll never leave our safe Retreat,
A Shelter in the time of storm.

O Rock divine, O Refuge dear,
A Shelter in the time of storm;
Be Thou our Helper ever near,
A Shelter in the time of storm.

Chapter 1

The rocks will cry out.

Zechariah 12:3

"It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured and all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

This speaks of a great future battle against Jerusalem. Some say it is Armageddon, the last great battle on earth. Those who oppose God's people will not prevail forever. Eventually, evil, pain, and oppression will be abolished once and for all.

For your sake, the rock will be moved from its place.

Job 18:4

"Oh you who tear yourself in your anger-- For your sake is the earth to be abandoned, or the rock to be moved from its place?"

Only the power of God can remove the rock. Your strength is in the Lord.

Job desired that his words would be written in the rock.

Job 19:23-24

"Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! "That with an iron stylus and lead they were engraved in the rock forever!"

Although Job struggled with the idea that God was presently against him, he firmly believed that in the end God would be on his side. This belief was so strong that Job became one of the first to talk about the resurrection of the body (see also Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2, 13).

His heart is as hard as a stone.

Job 41:24

"His heart is as hard as a stone, even as hard as a lower millstone.

How hard is our heart? The heart toward God is not a hard heart.

The enemy were hurled as stones.

Nehemiah 9:11

"You divided the sea before them, so they passed through the midst of the sea on dry ground; and their pursuers you hurled into the depths, like a stone into raging waters.

Many prayers and speeches in the Bible include a long summary of Israel's history because individuals did not have their own copies of the Bible as we do today. This summary of God's past works reminded the people of their great heritage and God's promises.

We should also remember our history to avoid repeating our mistakes so that we can serve God better. Reviewing our past helps us understand how to improve our behavior. It shows us the pattern to our spiritual growth. Learn from your past so that you will become the kind of person God wants you to be.

Chapter 2

God brought water from the rock of flint.

Deuteronomy 8:15

"He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint.

In times of plenty, we often take credit for our prosperity and become proud that our own hard work and cleverness have made us rich. It is easy to get so busy collecting and managing wealth that we push God right out of our lives. But it is God who gives us everything we have, and it is God who asks us to manage it for him.

God split the rocks in the wilderness to give them drink.

Psalm 78:15

He split the rocks in the wilderness and gave them abundant drink like the ocean depths.

How can a rock produce rock? Here God was showing that he could bring water from the most difficult place. If you are facing a difficult situation that seems impossible to take place, remember that God can bring water from a rock.

Strike the rock and water will come out.

Exodus 17:6

"Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

One of the greatest insults in Israelite culture was to call someone “a friend of Amalek.” When the Israelites entered the region, the Amalekites saw this as a perfect opportunity for both pleasure and profit. But this hostile tribe was moving in on the wrong group—a people led by God. For the Israelite slaves to defeat such a warlike nation was more than enough proof that God was with them as he had promised to be.

The rocks are broken by God.

Nahum 1:6

Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire and the rocks are broken up by Him.

No person on earth can safely defy God, the Almighty, and the Creator of all the universe. God, who controls the sun, the galaxies, and the vast stretches beyond, also controls the rise and fall of nations. How could a small temporal kingdom like Assyria, no matter how powerful, challenge God’s awesome power? If only Assyria could have looked ahead to see the desolate mound of rubble that it would become—and yet God would still be alive and well! Don’t defy God; he will be here forever with greater power than that of all armies and nations combined.

1 Samuel 13:6

When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were hard-pressed), then the people hid themselves in caves, in thickets, in cliffs, in cellars, and in pits.

When we forget who is on our side or see only our own resources, we tend to panic at the sight of the opposition. The Israelites became terrified and hid when they saw the mighty Philistine army. They forgot that God was on their side and that he couldn’t be defeated. As you face problems and temptations, focus your attention on God and his resources, trusting him to help you (Romans 8:31-37).

Chapter 3

God will lift you upon a rock.

Psalm 27:5

For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle; in the secret place of His tent He will hide me; He will lift me up on a rock.

David may have used the word *temple* to mean “the presence of the Lord.” His greatest desire was to live in God’s presence each day of his life. Sadly, this is not the greatest desire of many who claim to be believers. But those who desire to live in God’s presence each day will be able to enjoy that relationship forever.

God will set your feet upon a rock.

Psalm 40:2

He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.

Waiting for God to help us is not easy, but David received four benefits from waiting: God

- (1) Lifted him out of his despair,
- (2) Set his feet on a rock,
- (3) Gave him a firm place to stand, and
- (4) Put a new song of praise in his mouth.

Often blessings cannot be received unless we go through the trial of waiting.

Hide in the rock from the terror of the Lord.

Isaiah 2:10

Enter the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty.

Hide in the shelter of the huge rock.

Isaiah 32:2

Each will be like a refuge from the wind And a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry country, Like the shade of a huge rock in a parched land.

The “day” of the Lord Almighty is the Day of Judgment, the time when God will judge both evil and good. That day will come, and we will want a proper relationship with God when it does. God alone must be exalted (Isaiah 2:11, 17) as the first step toward developing that relationship with him.

They hid among the rocks.

Jeremiah 4:29

At the sound of the horseman and bowman every city flees; they go into the thickets and climb among the rocks; every city is forsaken, and no man dwells in them.

Jeremiah was anguished by the sure devastation of the coming judgment. This judgment would continue until the people turned from their sin and listened to God. Although this prophecy refers to the future destruction by Babylon, it could also describe the judgment of all sinners at the end of the world.

They shall hunt among the rocks.

Jeremiah 16:16

"Behold, I am going to send for many fishermen," declares the LORD, "and they will fish for them; and afterwards I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill and from the clefts of the rocks.

This section portrays the coming day of disaster. It begins by showing Jeremiah's loneliness. He is a social outcast because of his harsh messages and his celibate life-style.

He must not marry, have children, or take part in funerals or festivals. The section concludes with another appeal to avoid judgment by turning to God. The people did not heed Jeremiah's words, however, and the first wave of destruction came almost immediately, in 605 B.C. (2 Kings 24:8-12). The second wave came in 597 B.C., and Judah was completely destroyed in 586 B.C.

Those who hide high among the rocks will be brought down.

Jeremiah 49:16

"As for the terror of you, The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, O you who live in the clefts of the rock, Who occupy the height of the hill Though you make your nest as high as an eagle's, I will bring you down from there," declares the LORD.

Edom was located in a rock fortress that today is known as Petra, in southern Jordan. Edom thought it was invincible because of its location. Edom was destroyed because of her pride. Pride destroys individuals as well as nations. It makes us think we can take care of ourselves without God's help. Even serving God and others can lead us into pride. Take inventory of your life and service for God; ask God to point out and remove any pride you may be harboring.

Chapter 4

They cried for the rocks to fall on them.

Revelation 6:15-16

Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

At the sight of God sitting on the throne, all human beings, great and small, will be terrified, calling for the mountains to fall on them so that they will not have to face the judgment of the Lamb. This vivid picture was not intended to frighten believers.

For them, the Lamb is a gentle Savior. But those generals, emperors, or kings who previously showed no fear of God and arrogantly flaunted their unbelief will find that they were wrong, and in that day they will have to face God's wrath. No one who has rejected God can survive the day of his wrath, but those who belong to Christ will receive a reward rather than punishment.

Do you belong to Christ? If so, you need not fear these final days.

The Lord is an everlasting rock.

Isaiah 26:4

"Trust in the LORD forever, For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.

These four chapters are often called "Isaiah's Apocalypse." They discuss God's judgment on the entire world for its sin. Isaiah's prophecies were first directed to Judah, then to Israel, then to the surrounding nations, and finally to the whole

world. These chapters describe the last days when God will judge the whole world. At that time he will finally and permanently remove evil.

God is the shepherd, the stone of Israel

Genesis 49:23-25

"The archers bitterly attacked him, And shot at him and harassed him; But his bow remained firm, And his arms were agile, From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), From the God of your father who helps you, And by the Almighty who blesses you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

These verses celebrate the times God rescued Joseph when his enemies attacked him. So often we struggle by ourselves, forgetting that God is able to help us fight our battles, whether they are against men with weapons or against spiritual forces. Joseph was able to draw closer to God as adversity mounted. To trust God to rescue you shows great faith. Can you trust him when injury or persecution is directed at you? Such spiritual battles require teamwork between courageous, faithful people and a mighty God.

Deuteronomy 32:3-4

"For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God!"The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

Moses was not only a great prophet but also a song leader. After three sermons, he changed the form of his message to singing. Sometimes reciting something in a different form makes it easier to remember.

This song gives a brief history of Israel. It reminds the people of their mistakes, warns them to avoid repetition of those mistakes, and offers the hope that comes only in trusting God.

There is no rock like God.

1 Samuel 2:2

"There is no one holy like the LORD, Indeed, there is no one besides you, nor is there any rock like our God.

Hannah praised God for being a Rock—firm, strong, and unchanging. In our fast-paced world, friends come and go, and circumstances change. It's difficult to find a solid foundation that will not change.

Those who devote their lives to achievements, causes, or possessions have as their security that which is finite and changeable. The possessions that we work so hard to obtain will all pass away. But God is always present. Hope in him. He will never fail.

The God of Israel speaks to his people.

2 Samuel 23:2-4

"The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue. "The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me, 'He who rules over men righteously, Who rules in the fear of God, Is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, A morning without clouds, When the tender grass springs out of the earth, Through sunshine after rain.'

In the style of a prophet, David spoke of a just and righteous ruler. This will be fulfilled in Jesus Christ when he returns to rule in perfect justice and peace. For similar prophecies, see Isaiah 11:1-10; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Jeremiah 33:15-18; Zech. 9:9-10. For the fulfillment of some of these prophecies, see Matthew 4:14-16; Luke 24:25-27, 44-49; John 5:45-47; John 8:28-29.

Chapter 5

The Lord is my rock.

Psalm 42:9

I will say to God my rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

God is forever our solid rock. Run to him and be safe.

God is my rock, my stronghold.

Psalm 62:6

He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken.

David expressed his feelings to God and then reaffirmed his faith. Prayer can release our tensions in times of emotional stress. Trusting God to be our rock, salvation, and fortress (Psalm 62:2) will change our entire outlook on life. No longer must we be held captive by resentment toward others when they hurt us. When we are resting in God's strength, nothing can shake us.

There is no unrighteousness in God, my rock

Psalm 92:14-15

They will still yield fruit in old age; they shall be full of sap and very green, to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Honoring God is not limited to young people who seem to have unlimited strength and energy. Even in old age, devoted believers can produce spiritual fruit.

There are many faithful older people who continue to have a fresh outlook and can teach us from a lifetime experience of serving God. Seek out an elderly friend or relative to tell you about his or her experiences with the Lord and challenge you to new heights of spiritual growth.

There is no rock like God, my rock.

Isaiah 44:8

'Do not tremble and do not be afraid; have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are my witnesses is there any God besides Me, or is there any other Rock? I know of none.'

Isaiah describes how people make their own gods. How absurd to make a god from the same tree that gives firewood. Do we make our own gods—money, fame, or power? If we make a god of our own choosing, we deceive ourselves. We cannot expect it to empower our lives.

God our rock has established them.

Habakkuk 1:12

Are you not from everlasting, O LORD, my God, my Holy One? We will not die You, O LORD, have appointed them to judge; And You, O Rock, have established them to correct.

Babylon was proud of its military might, strategies, armies, and weapons. With no regard for humanity, the armies brought home riches, plunder, prisoners, and tribute from the nations they conquered. Such is the essence of idolatry—asking the gods we make to help us get all we want. The essence of Christianity is asking the God *who made us* to help us give all we can in service to him. The goal of idolatry is self-glory; the aim of Christianity is God's glory.

You are my rock and my fortress

Psalm 71:3

Be to me a rock of habitation to which I may continually come; you have given commandment to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

The psalmist was old and saw his life as a “portent,” a solemn sign or testimony to others of all God had done for him (Psalm 71:7, 18). Remembering God’s lifetime of blessing will help us see the consistency of his grace throughout the years, trust him for the future, and share with others the benefits of following him.

God gives strength in battle.

Deuteronomy 32:30

"How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had given them up?"

The rock of our enemies is not like our Rock, as even they recognize.

Who is our rock besides God?

2 Samuel 22:31-32

"As for God, His way is blameless; the word of the LORD is tested; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him. “For who is God, besides the LORD? And who is a rock, besides our God?"

David was not denying that he had ever sinned. Psalm 51 shows his tremendous anguish over his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. But David understood God’s faithfulness and was writing this hymn from God’s perspective. He knew that God had made him clean again—“whiter than snow,” (Psalm 51:7) with a “pure heart” (Psalm 51:10). Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we also are made clean and perfect. God replaces our sin with his purity, and he no longer sees our sin.

Chapter 6

Be to God as the strength of a rock.

Psalm 31:2-3

Incline your ear to me, rescue me quickly; be to me a rock of strength, a stronghold to save me. For you are my rock and my fortress; For Your name's sake you will lead me and guide me.

David called upon God to deliver him. He wanted God to stop those who were unjustly causing trouble. Therefore, David made his request based upon what he knew of God's name, or character. Because God is righteous and loving, he loves to deliver his people.

We say we have faith in God, but do we really trust him? David's words, "Into your hands I commit my spirit," convey his complete trust in God. Jesus used this phrase as he was dying on the cross—showing his absolute dependence on God the Father (Luke 23:46).

Stephen repeated these words as he was being stoned to death (Acts 7:59), confident that in death he was simply passing from God's earthly care to God's eternal care. We should commit our possessions, our families, and our vocations to God. But first and foremost, we should commit *ourselves* completely to him.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

Psalm 61:1-3

Hear my cry, O God; Give heed to my prayer. From the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For you have been a refuge for me, a tower of strength against the enemy.

David must have been far from home when he wrote this psalm. Fortunately, God is not limited to any geographic location. Even when we are among unknown people and surroundings, God never abandons us. A "higher" rock would be a plain of refuge and safety. God's all-surpassing strength is always with us

God is the rock of my strength.

Psalm 62:7

On God my salvation and my glory rest; the rock of my strength, my refuge is in God.

David expressed his feelings to God and then reaffirmed his faith. Prayer can release our tensions in times of emotional stress. Trusting God to be our rock, salvation, and fortress (Psalm 62:2) will change our entire outlook on life. No longer must we be held captive by resentment toward others when they hurt us. When we are resting in God's strength, nothing can shake us.

God is the rock of my refuge.

Psalm 94:22

But the LORD has been my stronghold, And my God the rock of my refuge.

At times, God must discipline us to help us. This is similar to a loving parent's disciplining his child. The discipline is not very enjoyable to the child, but it is essential to teach him right from wrong.

Blessed be the Lord, my rock.

Psalm 144:1-2

Blessed be the LORD, my rock, Who trains my hands for war, And my fingers for battle; My lovingkindness and my fortress, My stronghold and my deliverer, My shield and He in whom I take refuge, Who subdues my people under me.

Life is short. David reminds us that it is "like a breath" and that our "days are like a fleeting shadow." James says that our lives are "a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14).

Because life is short, we should live for God while we have the time. Don't waste your life by selecting an inferior purpose that has no lasting value. Live for God—he alone can make your life worthwhile, purposeful, and meaningful.

Remember the rock of your refuge.

Isaiah 17:10

For you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the rock of your refuge. Therefore you plant delightful plants and set them with vine slips of a strange god.

God's message to Damascus is that it will be completely destroyed. The Arameans had turned from the God who could save them, depending instead on their idols and their own strength. No matter how successful they were, God's judgment was sure. Often we depend on the trappings of success (expensive cars, pastimes, and clothes, homes) to give us fulfillment. But God says we will reap grief and pain if we have depended on temporal things to give us eternal security. If we don't want the same treatment Damascus received, we must turn from these false allurements and trust in God.

The Lord lives and blessed be the rock.

Psalm 18:46

The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of my salvation, David's great power had become legendary. God gave him victory in every battle.

The book of 2 Samuel records victories over the Jebusites (Psalm 5:6-10),

The Philistines (Psalm 5:17-25; Psalm 8:1-2),

Hadadezer of Zobah (Psalm 8:3-4), the Arameans (Psalm 8:5-6; 10),

The Edomites (Psalm 8:13-14), and the Ammonites (Psalm 12:26-31). In addition, the king of Tyre sent supplies and workmen to help David build his palace (Psalm 5:11). But David did not attribute his victories to himself.

He fully realized that the purpose of his position was to bless God's people (1 Chron. 14:2).

God is my rock and my redeemer.

Psalm 19:14

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

Would you change the way you live if you knew that every word and thought would be examined by God first? David asks that God approve his words and thoughts as though they were offerings brought to the altar. As you begin each day, determine that God's love will guide what you say and how you think.

God only is my rock and my salvation.

Psalm 62:2

He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken.

David expressed his feelings to God and then reaffirmed his faith. Prayer can release our tensions in times of emotional stress. Trusting God to be our rock, salvation, and fortress (Psalm 62:2) will change our entire outlook on life. No longer must we be held captive by resentment toward others when they hurt us. When we are resting in God's strength, nothing can shake us.

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They remembered that God was their rock.

Psalm 78:35

And they remembered that God was their rock, And the Most High God their Redeemer.

Over and over the children of Israel claimed that they would follow God, but then they turned away from him. The problem was that they followed God with words and not with their hearts; thus their repentance was empty. Talk is cheap. God wants our conduct to back up our spiritual claims and promises.

God is the rock of my salvation.

Psalm 89:26

"He will cry to me, 'You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.'

Let us joyfully sing to the rock of our salvation.

Psalm 95:1

O come, let us sing for joy to the LORD, Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation.

Chapter 7

Men will go into the rocks to escape the terror of the Lord.

Isaiah 2:19

Men will go into caves of the rocks and into holes of the ground before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble.

At the sight of God sitting on the throne, all human beings, great and small, will be terrified, calling for the mountains to fall on them so that they will not have to face the judgment of the Lamb. This vivid picture was not intended to frighten believers. For them, the Lamb is a gentle Savior.

But those generals, emperors, or kings who previously showed no fear of God and arrogantly flaunted their unbelief will find that they were wrong, and in that day they will have to face God's wrath. No one who has rejected God can survive the day of his wrath, but those who belong to Christ will receive a reward rather than punishment. Do you belong to Christ? If so, you need not fear these final days.

There is honey in God, our rock.

Psalm 81:16

"But I would feed you with the finest of the wheat, and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you."

God had provided in his covenant that he would restore his people if they would listen to him and return to him (Exodus 23:22-27; Leviticus 26:3-13; Deut. 7:12-26; Deut. 28:1-14).

God, the rock is our Place of safety in danger

1 Samuel 13:6

When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were hard-pressed), then the people hid themselves in caves, in thickets, in cliffs, in cellars, and in pits.

When we forget who is on our side or see only our own resources, we tend to panic at the sight of the opposition. The Israelites became terrified and hid when they saw the mighty Philistine army. They forgot that God was on their side and that he couldn't be defeated. As you face problems and temptations, focus your attention on God and his resources, trusting him to help you (Romans 8:31-37).

Men will seek safety among the rocks.

Revelation 6:15

Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains.

At the sight of God sitting on the throne, all human beings, great and small, will be terrified, calling for the mountains to fall on them so that they will not have to face the judgment of the Lamb. This vivid picture was not intended to frighten believers. For them, the Lamb is a gentle Savior.

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Chapter 8

Christ as a stumbling-stone to the wicked

Romans 9:33

And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

Sometimes we are like these people, trying to get right with God by keeping his laws. We may think that attending church, doing church work, giving offerings, and being nice will be enough. After all, we've played by the rules, haven't we?

But Paul's words sting—this approach never succeeds. Paul explains that God's plan is not for those who try to earn his favor by being good; it is for those who realize that they can never be good enough and so must depend on Christ. We can be saved only by putting our faith in what Jesus Christ has done. If we do that, we will never be “put to shame” or be disappointed.

A stone to strike and a rock in which to stumble

Isaiah 8:14

"Then He shall become a sanctuary; But to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Isaiah, along with most of the prophets, was viewed as a traitor because he did not support Judah's national policies. He called the people to commit themselves first to God, and then to the king. He even predicted the overthrow of the government.

A rock of offense

1 Peter 2:8

And, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

Peter portrays the church as a living, spiritual house, with Christ as the foundation and cornerstone and each believer as a stone. Paul portrays the church as a body, with Christ as the head and each believer as a member (see, for example, Ephes. 4:15-16). Both pictures emphasize *community*. One stone is not a temple or even a wall; one body part is useless without the others.

In our individualistic society, it is easy to forget our interdependence with other Christians. When God calls you to a task, remember that he is also calling others to work with you. Together your individual efforts will be multiplied. Look for those people and join with them to build a beautiful house for God.

God as the strength of his people

Isaiah 17:10

For you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the rock of your refuge. Therefore you plant delightful plants and set them with vine slips of a strange god.

God's message to Damascus is that it will be completely destroyed. The Arameans had turned from the God who could save them, depending instead on their idols and their own strength. No matter how successful they were, God's judgment was sure.

Often we depend on the trappings of success (expensive cars, pastimes, and clothes, homes) to give us fulfillment. But God says we will reap grief and pain if we have depended on temporal things to give us eternal security. If we don't want the same treatment Damascus received, we must turn from these false allurements and trust in God.

I love the Lord, my strength.

Psalm 18:1

"I love You, O LORD, my strength."

God is praised for his glorious works and blessings through the years.

God is the rock of my strength.

Psalm 62:7

On God my salvation and my glory rest; the rock of my strength, my refuge is in God.

David expressed his feelings to God and then reaffirmed his faith. Prayer can release our tensions in times of emotional stress. Trusting God to be our rock, salvation, and fortress (Psalm 62:2) will change our entire outlook on life. No longer must we be held captive by resentment toward others when they hurt us. When we are resting in God's strength, nothing can shake us.

A dove nests among the rocks.

Jeremiah 48:28

"Leave the cities and dwell among the crags, O inhabitants of Moab, and be like a dove that nests beyond the mouth of the chasm.

Moab was condemned for its pride. God cannot tolerate pride because pride is taking personal credit for what God has done or looking down on others. God does not condemn our taking satisfaction in what we do (Eccles. 3:22), but he stands against overestimates of our own importance. Romans 12:3 teaches us to have an honest estimate of ourselves.

Chapter 9

They ate honey from the rock.

Deuteronomy 32:13

"He made him ride on the high places of the earth, and he ate the produce of the field; And He made him suck honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock,

The Israelites had no excuse for abandoning God. He had shielded them like a kindly shepherd. He had guarded them like a person protects the pupil (apple) of his eye. He had been the encircling protector, like a mother eagle who protects her young. The Lord alone had led them. And he alone leads us. Let us remember to trust in him.

The cliffs are a refuge.

Psalm 104:18

The high mountains are for the wild goats; the cliffs are a refuge for the Stephanie.

Creation is filled with stunning variety, revealing the rich creativity, goodness, and wisdom of our loving God. As you observe your natural surroundings, thank God for his creativity. Take a fresh look at people, seeing each one as God's unique creation, each with his or her own special talents, abilities, and gifts.

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Unbelievers will be made a bare rock.

Ezekiel 26:14

"I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for the spreading of nets. You will be built no more, for I the LORD have spoken," declares the Lord GOD.

After a 15-year siege, Nebuchadnezzar could not conquer the part of Tyre located on the island; thus certain aspects of the description in Ezekiel 26:12, 14 exceed the actual damage done to Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. But the prophecy predicted what would happen to the island settlement later during the conquests of Alexander the Great. Alexander threw the rubble of the mainland city into the sea until it made a bridge to the island. Then he marched across the bridge and destroyed the island (332 B.C.). Today the island city is still a pile of rubble, a testimony to God's judgment.

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The rocks poured out streams of oil.

Job 29:6

When my steps were bathed in butter, and the rock poured out for me streams of oil!

Cream and olive oil were symbols of material prosperity in an agricultural society. Job's flocks and olive trees were so plentiful that everything seemed to overflow.

Christ is the rock of our salvation.

1 Peter 2:6

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, and precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

In describing the church as God's spiritual house, Peter drew on several Old Testament texts familiar to his Jewish Christian readers: Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14; Isaiah 28:16. Peter's readers would have understood the living stones to be Israel; then Peter applied the image of "stone" to Christ. Once again Peter showed that the church does not cancel the Jewish heritage, but fulfills it.

Peter portrays the church as a living, spiritual house, with Christ as the foundation and cornerstone and each believer as a stone. Paul portrays the church as a body, with Christ as the head and each believer as a member (see, for example, Ephes. 4:15-16). Both pictures emphasize *community*.

One stone is not a temple or even a wall; one body part is useless without the others. In our individualistic society, it is easy to forget our interdependence with other Christians. When God calls you to a task, remember that he is also calling others to work with you. Together your individual efforts will be multiplied. Look for those people and join with them to build a beautiful house for God.

Christians will sometimes be put to shame or face disappointment in this life, but their trust in God is never misplaced. God will not let them down. We can safely put our confidence in him because the eternal life he promises is certain.

No doubt Peter often thought of Jesus' words to him right after he confessed that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God": "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (Matthew 16:16-18). What is the stone that really counts in the building of the church? Peter answers:

Christ himself. What are the characteristics of Christ, the cornerstone? (1) He is completely trustworthy; (2) he is precious to believers; (3) and, though rejected by some, he is the most important part of the church.

The church is built upon a rock.

Matthew 16:18

"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

The rock on which Jesus would build his church has been identified as: (1) Jesus himself (his work of salvation by dying for us on the cross); (2) Peter (the first great leader in the church at Jerusalem); (3) the confession of faith that Peter gave and that all subsequent true believers would give. It seems most likely that the rock refers to Peter as the leader of the church (for his function, not necessarily his character). Just as Peter had revealed the true identity of Christ, so Jesus revealed Peter's identity and role.

Later, Peter reminds Christians that they are the church built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone (1 Peter 2:4-6). All believers are joined into this church by faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, the same faith that Peter expressed here (see also Ephes. 2:20-21). Jesus praised Peter for his confession of faith. It is faith like Peter's that is the foundation of Christ's kingdom.

You shall stand upon a rock.

Exodus 33:21

Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by me, and you shall stand there on the rock;

Moses' prayer was to see the manifest glory of God. He wanted assurance of God's presence with him, Aaron, and Joshua, and also he desired to know that presence experientially. Because we are finite and morally imperfect, we cannot exist and see God as he is. To see God's back means we can only see where God has passed by. We can only know him by what he does and how he acts.

Chapter 10

God is the impregnable rock.

Isaiah 33:16

He will dwell on the heights, His refuge will be the impregnable rock; His bread will be given him, His water will be sure.

God acts from above to change man's condition here on earth. Only when God's Spirit is among us can we achieve true peace and fruitfulness (Ezekiel 36:22-38; Galatians 5:22-23). This will happen in the end times. We can also have God's Spirit with us now, for he is available to all believers through Christ (John 15:26). But the outpouring mentioned here happens when the worldwide kingdom of God is established for all eternity (see Joel 2:28-29).

God put Moses in the cleft of the rock.

Exodus 33:22

And it will come about, while my glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by.

Moses' prayer was to see the manifest glory of God. He wanted assurance of God's presence with him, Aaron, and Joshua, and also he desired to know that presence experientially. Because we are finite and morally imperfect, we cannot exist and see God as he is.

To see God's back means we can only see where God has passed by. We can only know him by what he does and how he acts. We cannot comprehend God as he really is apart from Jesus Christ (John 14:9). Jesus promised to show himself to those who believe (John 14:21).

Fire sprang up from the rock.

Judges 6:21

Then the angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.

Why was Gideon afraid of seeing an angel? The Israelites believed that no one could see God and live (see God's words to Moses in Exodus 33:20). Evidently Gideon thought this also applied to angels.

Christ as refuge for his people

Isaiah 32:2

Each will be like a refuge from the wind And a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry country, Like the shade of a huge rock in a parched land.

Having suffered much injustice from evil rulers, many in Judah were hungry for a strong king who would rule with justice. This desire will be fulfilled when Christ reigns. Evil will be banished, and the King will reign in righteousness and rule with justice. In the immediate future, Judah would be destroyed and taken into captivity.

But one day, God's Son, the King unlike any other king, will reign in righteousness.

God is the rock of my refuge.

Psalm 94:22

But the LORD has been my stronghold, And my God the rock of my refuge.

Look to the rock in which you are hewn.

Isaiah 51:1

"Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug.

The faithful remnant may have felt alone because they were few. But God reminded them of their ancestors, the source of their spiritual heritage.

Abraham was only one person, but much came from his faithfulness. If the faithful few would remain faithful, even more could come from them. If we Christians, even a faithful few, remain faithful, think what God can do through us!

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

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