

# WILDERNESS LESSONS # 7

October 4, 2015

## At Rephidim (camp #10)

Num 33:14-15 journeyed from Alush and camped at **Rephidim**; (also Ex 17:1 - 19:3).

**Definition of Rephidim** = to give support; or bed, place of rest.

**Significance of the number 10** = ten is the number of perfection or completeness in divine order.

**Israel at Rephidim** (Ex. 17:1 - 19:3)

### A. Moses strikes the rock to provide water for Israel (Ex 17:1-7).

#### 1. Israel journeys from Alush and camped at Rephidim

Nu 33:14 They journeyed from Alush and camped at Rephidim; now it was there that the people had no water to drink.

Ex 17:1 Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. (see Ps 78:56; 106:7, 14, 25, 29)

#### 2. Israel murmurs and complaints for water (Ex 17:2-5)

Ex 17:2-5 Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may 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 they grumbled against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me."

**a. They were tempting or testing the Lord** (1Cor 10:9-10); by their attitude, for they were saying that God did not care and that He would not help them. They were trying His patience by their repeated complaints.

**b. In reality, this was actually:**

an opposition to His minister,  
a distrust of His care,  
an indifference to His kindness,  
an unbelief in His providence,  
a trying of His patience and fatherly forbearance.

**c. The people found fault** (quarreled, argued) **with Moses**; Moses tells the Lord, "A little more and they will stone me."

This is the last stage of rejection of a leader in Israel. Other leaders who experience this were:

David at Ziklag (1Sam 3:6); Adoram at Shechem (1Ki 12:18); Jesus (Jn 8:59; 10:31); Stephen (Acts 7:58); and Paul (Acts 14:19).

**d. Moses demonstrates what the trusting believer does in their hour of trial;**

They cry out (pray) to the Lord for help (Ex 15:25; 24:15; 32:30; 33:8) &

They ask (pray) for guidance (Jas 1:5).

### 3. Moses strikes the rock to provide water.

Ex 17:5-6 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your 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 will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

#### a. Moses strikes the rock (1Cor 10:4 the rock is Christ) with his rod.

The smiting of the rock speaks of Christ's death on the cross; where He felt the rod of the curse of the Law (Gal 3:10-13).

The water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who was given after Christ had risen from the dead (Jn 7:37-39).

#### b. Moses is a type of the Law: - He is a man of the Law;

The Law can't produce life, but leads to death (Gal 3:10-24; 4:3-4; 5:1-4; Rom 7:4-6).

Moses is a type of the Law, - Christ dies once, for all sin (Rom 6:9-10; Heb 9:26-28).

#### c. Moses fails the test in Num 20:1-13: - God tells Moses to speak to the rock, but Moses strikes the rock.

Consequently, he was forbidden to enter the land of Canaan.

Dt 32:51-52 "because you broke faith with Me in the midst of the sons of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, because you did not treat Me as holy in the midst of the sons of Israel. For you shall see the land at a distance, but you shall not go there, into the land which I am giving the sons of Israel" (Ps 106:32).

In Psa 95:8-11, we are exhorted not to have a hardened unbelieving heart.

Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness, 9 When your fathers tested Me, they tried Me, though they had seen My work. For forty years I loathed that generation, and said they are a people who err in their heart, and they do not know My ways. 11 Therefore I swore in My anger, truly they shall not enter into My rest." (Heb 3:11, 18; 4:1, 3, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11).

### 4. The place is named Massah and Meribah.

Ex 17:7 He named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us, or not?"

Though Rephidim became a place of blessing, it is given the name of Massah and Meribah because of Israel's criticisms and complaints against Moses and God.

Massah = "testing"; (is from the root *nasah*; "to try," or "tempt," and means "trial" or "temptation")

Moses names this place "Massah" because they put God to the test.

Meribah = "strife"; (is from the root *rub*; "to chide, quarrel," and means "contention, chiding, strife.")

Moses names this place "Meribah" because the Israelites contended with him

## B. Moses strikes down the foe (Ex 17:8-16).

### 1. Amalek opposes Israel.

Ex 17:8 Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim.

#### a. Definition of Amalek = dweller in a valley.

#### b. Amalek is a type of the flesh:

Amalek is Esau's grandson (Gen 36:12, 16).

God declares that he will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek (Ex 17:14).  
Jehovah Nissi is given with the generational battle with Amalek (Ex 17:16; Dt 25:17-19).  
King Saul was given command to destroy Amalek (1Sam 15:1-3).  
However, Saul kept the best of the spoils of war (1Sam 15:9-21).  
Consequently, Saul is rejected as king (1Sam 15:22-23).  
Saul is finally killed by an Amalekite (2Sam 1:1-10, 13).

### c. The battle of flesh and spirit

Rom 6 tells us to reckon and to yield, and by faith to put to death the deeds of the body.

Ro 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Ro 6:13-14 ... present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Ro 6:6-7 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

2Cor 10:3-4 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

Gal 5:16-17 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

## 2. Amalek is overcome.

Ex 17:9-13 So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." 10 Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. 12 But Moses' hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. 13 So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

**a. Joshua (Jesus) leads them in battle;** this field training would serve him well later in Canaan. God had trained Moses for his work; He was now training Joshua to succeed him. This is the first mention of Joshua, the man who would later succeed Moses. He had chosen Joshua to be his close aide (Ex. 24:13; 32:17; 33:11).

**b. Moses will station himself** (pray for them) with the staff of God in his hand.

- 1.) "I will stand on top of the hill", uses the emphatic I;  
(translated literally) = "I, for my part, shall take my stand on the hilltop."
- 2.) Moses' **holding the staff of God** (V. 20) **above his head** with both hands symbolized:  
Israel's total dependence on the power of God.  
When Moses lowered his hands,  
a picture of lack of dependence, the enemy was winning.
- 3.) **The staff of God** (see Ex 4:20, 17:9)  
"the stick that God told me to carry."  
"holding this walking stick that has the power of God."

#### 4.) Significance of **raised hands**:

1. Raised up hands is a military signal for the beginning of a battle or for the advance. Likewise, lowering his hand could be a signal for retreat.
2. The uplifted hand can be a sign of taking an oath, or making a promise (Gen 14:22).
3. The raised hands is a posture of prayer and trust in the Lord (1Tim 2:8; Psa 63:4 134:2); to lower the hands, would be to cease to pray; to cease to depend on God for help.

**c. Aaron and Hur supported arms and hands of Moses** until the sun set and Joshua won.

#### 3. **The LORD is My Banner**

Ex 17:14-16 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." 15 Moses built an altar and named it The LORD is My Banner; 16 and he said, " The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation."

Moses built an altar and named it "The LORD is my banner"; or  
"The Lord Gives Me Victory," or "Jehovah is my Signal Pole"

The Lord (Jesus) is our banner of victory, in the battle!

#### **References used in this study:**

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Interpreting the Symbols and Types; by Kevin J. Conner  
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