

## Thirsty People, A Rock, and a Crucified Savior: A Typological and Slightly Humorous Reflection on Exodus 17

Let's be honest—if you were wandering in the desert for 40 years with nothing but manna for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, you might get a little cranky, too. The Israelites sure did. Their go-to move? Complaining.

*"Why did you bring us out here to die, Moses? There was food and water in Egypt!"*

Translation: *We'd rather be slaves with full stomachs than free people who have to trust in God.*

And Moses? He's had it. He's basically saying, *"Lord, if You don't do something, I'm about to get voted off the island."*

God, always patient (and probably shaking His divine head), tells Moses to take his trusty staff, **strike the rock**, and watch as water gushes forth. A miracle!

But this is more than a hydration station—this is a **preview of salvation history**.

### Typology Breakdown: The Rock, the Cross, and Christ

The Israelites' water crisis in Exodus 17 wasn't just about their physical thirst—it pointed to the **spiritual thirst of all humanity**. And just as God provided for them, He provides for us in **Christ, the true Rock**.

#### Water from the Rock (Ex 17:1-7)

God commands Moses to take elders as witnesses (Ex 17:5).

God is present on the rock (Ex 17:6).

Moses (leader) and Aaron (High Priest) act as God's representatives (Ex 3:10; 4:14-16).

Moses strikes the rock with his staff (Ex 17:5).

Water flows from the rock to sustain the people (Ex 17:6).

#### Jesus' Crucifixion at Golgotha

Some elders of Israel (Sanhedrin) witnessed Jesus' crucifixion (Mt 27:41-42).

Jesus is the Rock (1 Cor 10:4).

The Sanhedrin and High Priest Caiaphas, also God's representatives, condemn Jesus (Mt 26:57, 66).

Jesus, the true Rock, is struck—beaten, crucified, and pierced (Mt 26:67; Jn 19:17-18, 34).

Blood and water flow from Jesus' side (Jn 19:34)—the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist.

Now, here's where it gets **theologically serious (but also ironic)**.

Later, in **Numbers 20:1-11**, Moses faces another water crisis. But this time, God says, "*Just speak to the rock.*" Moses, frustrated beyond words, **whacks the rock again** instead. Water still flows, but God rebukes Moses for messing up the typology.

Why? Because Christ **is only struck once**.

His sacrifice on the Cross was **once for all** (Heb 9:26-28). From that point on, **we don't strike Christ again—we approach Him through faith, word, and sacraments**.

Moses' mistake? It's like hitting "refresh" on a webpage that already loaded. **The work was already done**.

### **Meribah, Massah, and the Mass**

The Israelites named this whole episode "**Massah**" (**Testing**) and "**Meribah**" (**Quarreling**) because they literally tested God's patience.

And what's the opposite of quarreling and testing God? **Trusting Him**.

Which brings us to the **Mass**—where the same Christ who was struck for us **once** offers us the living water of the Eucharist. The sacrifice of Calvary is not *repeated* but *made present* at every Mass. When the priest speaks to Christ, the Rock—"*This is My Body, This is My Blood*"—**the living water of grace flows again**.

### **Final Thought: Are We Still Complaining?**

The Israelites asked, "*Is the Lord in our midst or not?*"—and they had a giant pillar of cloud and fire leading them.

What about us? Do we still complain, asking "*God, are You really here?*"—while we sit in a church with the Eucharist right in front of us?

God *is* in our midst—He was in the rock at Horeb, on the Cross at Calvary, and He is in the tabernacle today. We don't have to grumble in the wilderness. We just have to come to **the Rock, drink from the living water, and trust that He will always provide**.