

HA SUR—THE ROCK
Deuteronomy 32: 1- 18, 28- 31, text: v.v. 3- 4
November 14, 2021

I. What It Means for God's People

A. In Calling God "the Rock," Moses was comparing him to a huge rock formation.

1. **Just as you or I cannot move a huge rock formation, the whole universe cannot move or change God.**
2. **He is completely faithful and just, and we can always count on his promises.**

Deuteronomy 32:3-4 (NIV) I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

B. The LORD God is the one who rules over all.

Psalms 93:1 (NIV) The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed in majesty and is armed with strength. The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.

1. **He's the Creator who made the laws that govern this universe—the physical laws that keep the stars in place and allow life to flourish, and the moral laws that govern our relationships and enable humanity to flourish.**
2. **God continually exercises his rule.**
3. **And he does so even over those who worship other gods.**
 - a. **Israel had seen that in what God did to the powerful Egyptians, sending the plagues and drowning Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea.**
 - b. **Even the other nations realized that their gods were no match for the one true God.**

Deuteronomy 32:31 (NIV) For their rock is not like our Rock, as even our enemies concede.

C. Moses' song, however, is not so much about God the Rock's relationship with the universe or even with all people on this earth, but rather his relationship with his people.

Deuteronomy 32:6b (NIV) Is he not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?

1. **Out of all the people on earth, God chose Israel to be his own.**
2. **It was God who saved them from Egypt and who enabled them to survive for forty years in the desert.**

Deuteronomy 32:10-11 (NIV) In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye, like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions.

3. **Moses' song should also speak to us who trust in Jesus Christ, because as those united to Christ we are his chosen people today.**

1 Peter 2:9-10 (NIV) But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

D. Our Lord God is that firm unshakeable foundation who gives strength and hope to all those who in faith build their lives on him.

1. **In this world of change and decay where unjust and unfair things happen, we can count on our faithful unchanging God, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.**
2. **He is always just and always does what is right.**
3. **As long as we as God's people remain in him we have hope and security even in difficult times.**

Psalms 18:2 (NIV) The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

4. **Jesus reminded us how important it is to build our lives on him our rock.**

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV) "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

- a. **We are saved in him.**
- b. **And we must live-out our saved lives by following his example and teaching.**
- c. **When we do we are on a firm foundation.**

Questions:

- 1) **When have I last been disappointed by others in whom I trusted? Why is it so comforting to know that God is my Rock?**
- 2) **As I reflect on the moral laws God has given regarding sexual behavior, what would I say to those who say that they are not doing wrong by disobeying them, since they're not hurting anyone else? How might such people's behaviors not only hurt themselves and other individuals, but also all society. (Think for example of children who are raised by unmarried parents who keep having new partners. What does this teach them about commitment and responsibility? And what happens to a society where children don't understand such things?)**
- 3) **Why is it comforting to know that God is my Rock even during those times when he allows bad things to happen in my life, or other people to do cruel things to me?**
- 4) **How have I been striving to keep my foundation in Christ my Rock?**

II. Times When God's People Lose Their Connection to the Rock

A. The point of Moses' Song was to tell Israel that there would be a time coming when they would not be grounding their lives in him and putting their hope in his promises.

Deuteronomy 32:5 (NIV) They have acted corruptly toward him; to their shame they are no longer his children, but a warped and crooked generation.

1. **They had already done that when they were in the desert.**
 - a. **They worshipped the golden calf.**
 - b. **And when God brought them to The Promised Land the first time, they became afraid of the people there and refused to obey his command to go in.**

c. He sent them back to the desert for 40 years that they might learn to trust him.

2. Yet, Moses' song is not about that past, but about the future.

Deuteronomy 31:29 (NIV) For I know that after my death you are sure to become utterly corrupt and to turn from the way I have commanded you. In days to come, disaster will fall upon you because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD and provoke him to anger by what your hands have made."

B. This song is about the time after they've entered into the Promised Land and enjoyed the blessings of the living there.

Deuteronomy 32:15 (NIV) Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; filled with food, he became heavy and sleek. He abandoned the God who made him and rejected the Rock his Savior.

1. "Jeshurun" is a special name that God gave his people.

a. It's related to the Hebrew for upright.

b. They were the righteous nation of God.

c. Isaiah 26:2-4 says that a righteous nation continues to trust in the Lord.

Isaiah 26:2-4 (NIV) Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the nation that keeps faith. You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.

2. But Moses says that God's righteous nation will turn their back on him and serve the idols of the nations around them.

a. That is so clearly expressed in verse 15- 18.

b. As we read the account of Israel's and Judah's history in the rest of the Old Testament and about what the prophets had to say about them, this is exactly what happened.

c. They turned away from the Rock after enjoying his blessings in the Promised Land.

C. Isn't that what's happening in the church today?

1. A large number, who grew up in the Christian families and even professed their faith are no longer in church.

2. Some have had multiple sexual relationships.

3. They get drunk and high.

4. And basically their lives are no different than those who never grew up in a Christian home or professed Jesus as Savior.

Questions:

- 1) When have I struggled trust in God as my Rock during difficult times in my life? When have struggled to keep trusting in God my Rock when things are going well in my life and after he has blessed me in many ways? When it is harder to trust in him, during difficult times or good times? Why?
- 2) Why are so many children who were raised in the church living lives that are no different than those of unbelievers? Is it primarily because they are struggling against persecution and other such challenges to their faith or because they desire to be like the world around them? How can we as a church and as parents reach out to them?
- 3) Am I truly putting my trust in the Lord, my Rock, or am I trusting in others or other things? How do I show that? (Read what Jesus said about this in Matthew 6: 19-34.)

III. How in Spite of His People's Weakness and Failure God Still Remains Their Rock

A. Moses' song ends in hope.

1. In the end it is not so much a song of the unfaithfulness of God's people, but of God's faithfulness to them anyway.

2. Certainly for a while he punishes and chastises.

3. But in the end he brings his people back to life and renews his relationship with them.

Deuteronomy 32:39 (NIV) "See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.

4. The song ends with a word of joy and comfort to God's people.

Deuteronomy 32:43 (NIV) Rejoice, O nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants; he will take vengeance on his enemies and make atonement for his land and people.

B. In our sins and failures, let us not forget that God is our rock.

1. Sometimes it is when we are sinking in our failures that we most clearly recognize him as our rock.

2. That certainly was true for Simon, whom Jesus named Peter, the rock.

a. It was when he was drowning because of his lack of that he felt Jesus loving hand pulling him back, enabling him to walk on water again.

b. And it was after he denied his Lord, that he received his grace to be his disciple again.

c. Peter became the rock not because of who he was, but because of his connection to the one true Rock.

Questions:

- 1) What other examples can I give from the Bible of how God was a rock to those who sinned and fell away from him?
- 2) As I grieve over lightly attended worship services and over Christians living like non-Christians, how does God the Rock help me to have hope for the church today?
- 3) As I reflect on my failures, how does knowing God the Rock give me hope for my life?
- 4) How does experiencing the God the Rock's commitment to me help me to strengthen my commitment to him.

In our weakness and sin may this also be our song—Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.