**Numbers 20; Moses Brings Water from the Rock**

***“The Israelites, the whole community arrived in the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed at Kadesh. It was here that Miriam died, and here that she was buried. Since the community had no water, they held an assembly against Moses and Aaron. The people quarreled with Moses, exclaiming, ‘Would that we had perished when our kindred perished before the Lord! Why have you brought the Lord’s assembly into the wilderness for us and our livestock to die here?’”*** *(Numbers 20:1-4)*

* Verse one reveals that the Israelites came into the wilderness on Zin. The people stayed in Kadesh.
* In Numbers 13, the Israelites were in Kadesh when the men who scouted the land of Canaan returned.
* Ten of the twelve scouts gave a negative report. They filled the people with fear that they would be consumed in the land of Canaan.
* The Israelites of the first generation wanted to return to Egypt.
* God had promised the Israelites that He would give them possession of the land of Canaan. The Israelites were not able to move beyond their fear to faith.
* The first generation of Israelites were punished for their lack of faith. They would not be able to enter the promised land but would spend forty years in the desert. One year for each day the scouts were in the land of Canaan.
* Miriam was part of the first generation of Israelites who would die in the desert.
* Kadesh was the site of the Israelite’s rejection of God’s promise that they would take possession of the land of Canaan.
* Now it is the site of the Israelites’ lack of faith that God would provide for their material needs. Exodus 17:1-17 also covers the Israelites rebellion at Meribah.
* The Israelites had a legitimate need for water. Instead of taking their need to God in prayer they quarreled with Moses and Aaron.
* *“Would that we had perished when our kindred perished before the Lord.”*
* The people have no trust in God. The people believe that it would be better for them to have died with the first generation then to be alive and have to struggle in the wilderness.
* Although they were in the desert, God had provided for their needs with manna, quail, and water.
* They were only focused on the negative as opposed to being objective.

***“But Moses and Aaron went away from the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting, where they fell prostrate. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to them, and the Lord said to Moses: Take the staff and assemble the community, you and Aaron your brother, and in their presence command the rock to yield its waters. Thereby you will bring forth water from the rock for them, and supply the community and their livestock with water.”*** *(Numbers 20:6-8)*

* In this scripture, Moses is instructed to tell the rock to yield its water.
* In Exodus 17:6, Moses is instructed to strike the rock with his staff.
* Initially, Moses did what he was told to do in taking the staff and assembling the people.

***“Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly in front of the rock, where he said to them, ‘Just listen, you rebels! Are we to produce water for you out of this rock?’ Then raising his hand, Moses struck the rock twice with his staff, and water came out in abundance, and the community and their livestock drank.”*** *(Numbers 20:10-11)*

* Moses did not follow God’s instruction. Moses was to “command” the rock to yield water.
* Moses strikes the rock twice with his staff as opposed to using words.

***“But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron: Because you did not have confidence in me, to acknowledge my holiness before the Israelites, therefore you shall not lead this assembly into the land I have given them.”*** *(Numbers 20:12)*

* In Deuteronomy 17 there is no mention of Aaron while in Numbers 20, Aaron is with Moses.
* In Numbers both Moses and Aaron share in the sin of mistrusting God. This scripture does not specifically say what their sin is.
* Some Scripture scholars believe that the sin of Moses was that he struck the rock twice. In Moses 17:6 Moses was to “strike” the rock.
* Other Scripture scholars believe the sin of Moses was that he was to command the rock to yield its water but instead struck the rock with his staff twice.
* In Deuteronomy 1:37 the punishment inflicted on Moses is attributed to the people’s disobedience.
* Moses was the mediator between God and Israel. Moses was a type of Christ.
* Moses had freely taken the sins of the Israelites upon himself that the Israelites may be reconciled with Yahweh for the apostasy of the golden calf.
* Christ took the sins of humanity on Himself. Jesus took our sins on Himself so that humanity could be reconciled with God the Father.
* For Moses the cost of being a mediator for the Israelites was that he would not be able to lead the Israelites into the promised land.
* For Jesus the cost of being a mediator for humanity was that He would suffer a tortuous passion and would die on the cross.
* Moses freely took the sin of Israel upon himself while Jesus would freely take the sins humanity on Himself.

The Navarre Bible; Pentateuch; Numbers 20; Scepter Publishers; New York; 1986

[Enduring Word Bible Commentary Numbers Chapter 20](https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/numbers-20/)

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