

Numbers 20:1-13

MOSES SMITING THE ROCK

1. The setting.

1. The Lord tries Israel with the lack of water for the congregation (2).

1. They gathered in order to contend or strive (“chode” 3) with Moses and Aaron.

2. These generations of Israel are no better than the previous, using similar language.

- Moses and Aaron’s reaction.

1. Their hopes for these generations are dashed in frustration.

2. They still go to God at the door of the tabernacle.

3. At Rephidim (Ex. 17:6) God commanded Moses to strike the rock for water.

- Moses (and Aaron) sinned grievously.

1. The sin was not that Moses hit the rock instead of speaking to it.

2. Moses did not believe God - “ye believed Me not” (12)

1. Moses saw the people as “rebels” (10), i.e., as reprobate and not as the church.

2. Note well that God declares Moses’ attitude and action to be just as rebellious as the people (24).

3. Thus he refused to fulfill his God-given calling to mediate for these sinning saints.

- And Moses did not “sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel” (12).

1. By despairing of Israel being saved, Moses saw the people only in their sin.

2. But God always sees them (and us) in Christ as separated from sin by God’s grace.

- God’s response.

1. To Moses and Aaron come consequences (not punishment) because they did not magnify God.

1. It “went ill with Moses for their sakes” (Psalm 106:32): not allowed to bring the people into the land of promise.
 2. Moses was very, very meek, but not meek enough, so we look up to the better: Christ.
- To the people God provided water (cf. I Cor. 10:4 and John 4:14).
 - True Israel saw their sin in Moses’ words, repented and in faith drank of Christ’s forgiveness.