

Wandering in the Wilderness

Israel spent eleven months at Mount Sinai. After this, the Lord led Israel to the borders of the Promise Land. The journey was short, but filled with unbelief and bitter complaining (Numbers 11—14). Then at Kadesh-barnea, Israel broke the Camel's back so to speak, their defiance against God was unbelievable.

Therefore, God condemned the people to forty years of wandering in the wilderness (Numbers 14:33, 34). Their unbelief and rebellion transformed an eleven-day journey into one that lasted forty years. The forty years were filled with more rebellion and complaining. Even to the point that Moses, this great man of God, "... lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also" (Numbers 20:11).

Now on the surface things appeared to be good – they needed water and the water came.

But God was not pleased with Moses, nor with Aaron, because they had sinned against God – they both, had disobeyed God. In verse 8 of Numbers 20, God gave instruction to "... speak ye unto the rock before their eyes" Now the interesting word in verse 8 is "speak." The word is a plural verb, and that means that both Moses and Aaron were to "speak" to the rock, not strike it.

This wandering in the wilderness had not only affected the nation, but the nation's rebellion and complaining, had also stirred Moses and Aaron emotionally and caused them to move against God – something that they would not have normally done.

Therefore, "... the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them" (Numbers 20:12). (Read: Hebrews 12:3-11.)

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