

Week #:	42	Text:	Exodus 17:1-16; Joshua 24:1-28	Title:	Into the Desert: Water from the Rock
Songs:	You Are My All In All – Aaron Shust (4:03)				
	Because of Who You Are – Vicki Yohe (5:16)				
	I Need You More – Lindell Cooley (5:03)				

## Into the Desert: Water from the Rock

### Exodus 17 Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)

The whole community of the people of Isra'el left the Seen Desert, traveling in stages, as Adonai had ordered, and camped at Refidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> The people quarreled with Moshe, demanding, "Give us water to drink!" But Moshe replied, "Why pick a fight with me? Why are you testing Adonai?" <sup>3</sup> However, the people were thirsty for water there and grumbled against Moshe, "For what did you bring us up from Egypt? To kill us, our children and our livestock with thirst?"

<sup>4</sup> Moshe cried out to Adonai, "What am I to do with these people? They're ready to stone me!"

<sup>5</sup> Adonai answered Moshe, "Go on ahead of the people, and bring with you the leaders of Isra'el. Take your staff in your hand, the one you used to strike the river; and go. <sup>6</sup> I will stand in front of you there on the rock in Horev. You are to strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so the people can drink." Moshe did this in the sight of the leaders of Isra'el. <sup>7</sup> The place was named Massah [testing] and M'rivah [quarreling] because of the quarreling of the people of Isra'el and because they tested Adonai by asking, "Is Adonai with us or not?"

Until now the journey has had many obstacles, but more importantly God has shown many miracles. At every turn God brought about a new mark towards their ultimate destiny. Picture it like a map on the wall, marked with little pins as they travel through these things. At every little pin they meet a new obstacle – but more importantly, they see a new miracle of God. At every pin they see a new character of God revealed. God is revealing himself to His people one little bit at a time.

These miracles aren't just in their past – these miracles, some of them anyway, are still being seen DAILY in their lives. Manna and quail are showing up daily for them. And yet at every turn their attitude showed their lack of trust in God, because every time something comes up, they begin murmuring against God and against God's man for the job, Moses. They were showing their rebellious heart.

God daily sent the bread from heaven to see if they were going to walk in His Torah or not. Jesus is the bread from heaven. God sent Jesus to see if *WE* would daily walk in His Torah or not.

God has an answer for every honest *WHY* we can ask, but He's not going to answer a rebellious *WHY*. Sometimes we get so rebellious and adamant that God do things our way, that god show us things in our timing, that god reveal Himself only the way we want Him to be revealed. It's not about our way. It's not about our timing. It's not about our vision of God. It's all about God's way. God has an ultimate plan... and ultimate destiny... and it cannot be revealed to a rebellious heart.

Do we want our own destiny for our lives, or do we want God's destiny for our lives?

In their murmuring they forgot what God had already brought them through. The plagues of Egypt, the suffering and trials that God revealed a characteristic of Himself through, was not too far in their past. They've only been in the desert a month and a half at this point, and they are already forgetting what God has done. They are already marking those miracles as not important enough in their minds – all because of their murmuring. This is a condition of their heart. Their murmuring led to their lack of destiny. God wanted

to bring them to a Promised land flowing with milk and honey – flowing with the good things He was planning on giving them... good things of Himself. Throughout the Bible God is referring to Himself when it talks of milk and honey. But their murmuring hearts and mouths of the children of Israel made this step [God bringing them to this land] impossible. God's will for their destiny was not to leave them in the desert 40 years, but that's where they ended up staying – and dying – because of their rebellious hearts.

So many times through the scriptures God reminds us that the condition of our heart is revealed through the words we say.

*"You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."* Matthew 12:34

*"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life."* Proverbs 4:23

*"The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence."* Proverbs 10:11

*"Fools say in their hearts, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is no one who does good."* Psalm 14:1

*"All deeds are right in the sight of the doer, but the Lord weighs the heart."* Proverbs 21:2

*"if you say, 'Look, we did not know this'— does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it? And will he not repay all according to their deeds?"* Proverbs 24:12

*"But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, says the Lord God."* Ezekiel 11:21

*"How sick is your heart, says the Lord God, that you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen whore;"* Ezekiel 16:30

*"The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks."* Luke 6:45

What is God's destiny? When is it going to be revealed?

The thing about destiny is that it isn't a final point on the map, it's a journey. Each pin on that map marks a part of that destiny. Even after one generation is gone, God still has something for the next generation, and He has a purpose for the past, along with a plan for the future. God's ultimate destiny in one sense was that Jesus come to make a way for everyone to be with Him. This has, in part, been fulfilled, but we are still – generations later – living in the journey of this destiny.

After the children of Israel had been in the desert 40 years, and after they had conquered the Promised land, we finally see a big part of God's destiny revealed.

Joshua 24:1-28 Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)

Y'hoshua [Joshua] gathered all the tribes of Isra'el to Sh'khem [Shechem]; he summoned the leaders, heads, judges and officials of Isra'el; and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2</sup> Y'hoshua [Joshua] said to all the people, "This is what ADONAI the God of Isra'el says: 'In antiquity your ancestors lived on the other side of the [Euphrates] River — Terach [Tera] the father of Avraham [Abraham] and

Nachor — and they served other gods. <sup>3</sup> I took your ancestor Avraham [Abraham] from beyond the River, led him through all the land of Kena'an, increased his descendants and gave him Yitz'chak. <sup>4</sup> I gave to Yitz'chak [Isaac] Ya'akov [Jacob] and 'Esav [Esau]. To 'Esav [Esau] I gave Mount Se'ir as his possession, but Ya'akov [Jacob] and his children went down into Egypt. <sup>5</sup> I sent Moshe [Moses] and Aharon, I inflicted plagues on Egypt in accordance with what I did among them, and afterwards I brought you out. <sup>6</sup> Yes, I brought your fathers out of Egypt: you arrived at the sea, and the Egyptians were pursuing your ancestors with chariots and horsemen to the Sea of Suf. <sup>7</sup> But when they cried out to ADONAI, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, overwhelmed them with the sea and drowned them. Your eyes saw what I did in Egypt, and then you lived in the desert for a long time. <sup>8</sup> I brought you into the land of the Emori [Amorites] living beyond the Yarden [other side of the Jordan]; they fought against you, but I handed them over to you. You took possession of their land, and I destroyed them ahead of you. <sup>9</sup> Then Balak the son of Tzippor [Zippor], king of Mo'av [Moab], rose up and fought against Isra'el. He sent and summoned Bil'am [Balaam] the son of B'or [Beor] to put a curse on you. <sup>10</sup> But I refused to listen to Bil'am [Balaam], and he actually blessed you. In this way I rescued you from him. <sup>11</sup> Next you crossed the Yarden [Jordan] and came to Yericho [Jericho]. The men of Yericho [Jericho] fought against you — the Emori [Amorites], P'rizi [Perizzites], Kena'ani [Canaanites], Hitti [Hittites], Girgashi [Gergashites], Hivi [Hivites] and Y'vusi [Jebusites] — and I handed them over to you. <sup>12</sup> I sent the hornet ahead of you, driving them out from ahead of you, the two kings of the Emori {Amorites} — it wasn't by your sword or your bow. <sup>13</sup> Then I gave you a land where you had not worked and cities you had not built, and you live there. You eat fruit from vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'

<sup>14</sup> "Therefore fear ADONAI, and serve him truly and sincerely. Put away the gods your ancestors served beyond the [Euphrates]River and in Egypt, and serve ADONAI! <sup>15</sup> If it seems bad to you to serve ADONAI, then choose today whom you are going to serve! Will it be the gods your ancestors served beyond the River? or the gods of the Emori [Amorites], in whose land you are living? As for me and my household, we will serve ADONAI!"

<sup>16</sup> The people answered, "Far be it from us that we would abandon ADONAI to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup> because it is ADONAI our God who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from a life of slavery, and did those great signs before our eyes, and preserved us all along the way we traveled and among all the peoples we passed through; <sup>18</sup> and it was ADONAI who drove out from ahead of us all the peoples, the Emori [Amorites] living in the land. Therefore we too will serve ADONAI, for he is our God."

<sup>19</sup> Y'hoshua [Joshua] said to the people, "You can't serve ADONAI; because he is a holy God, a jealous God, and he will not forgive your crimes and sins. <sup>20</sup> If you abandon ADONAI and serve foreign gods, he will turn, doing you harm and destroying you after he has done you good."

<sup>21</sup> But the people said to Y'hoshua [Joshua], "No, but we will serve ADONAI."

<sup>22</sup> Y'hoshua [Joshua] said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen ADONAI, to serve him."

They answered, "We are witnesses."

<sup>23</sup> "Now," Y'hoshua [Joshua] urged, "put away the foreign gods you have among you, and turn your hearts to ADONAI, the God of Isra'el."

<sup>24</sup> The people answered Y’hoshua [Joshua], “We will serve ADONAI our God; we will pay attention to what he says.”

<sup>25</sup> So Y’hoshua [Joshua] made a covenant with the people that day, laying down for them laws and rulings there in Sh’khem [Shechem]. <sup>26</sup> Y’hoshua [Joshua] wrote these words in the book of the Torah of God. Then he took a big stone and set it up there under the oak next to the sanctuary of ADONAI. <sup>27</sup> Y’hoshua [Joshua] said to all the people, “See, this stone will be a witness against us; because it has heard all the words of ADONAI which he said to us; therefore it will be a witness against you, in case you deny your God.” <sup>28</sup> Then Y’hoshua [Joshua] sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

Throughout this entire exchange, we see Joshua continually admonishing them of one thing – put away your other gods and turn your hearts towards the one true God. This shows that even in all God had brought them through to this point, they were still clinging to the world. They still held onto those idols of the past generations. They still held tight to their trust in something other than God.

All God wants is complete devotion. All He wants is complete trust in Him and His ways. God’s desire hasn’t changed to this day. He still only wants our complete devotion. He still only wants our trust in Him and His ways.

Exodus 17:8-13

<sup>8</sup> Then ‘Amalek came and fought with Isra’el at Refidim. <sup>9</sup> Moshe said to Y’hoshua [Joshua], “Choose men for us, go out, and fight with ‘Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with God’s staff in my hand.” <sup>10</sup> Y’hoshua [Joshua] did as Moshe had told him and fought with ‘Amalek. Then Moshe, Aharon and Hur went up to the top of the hill. <sup>11</sup> When Moshe raised his hand, Isra’el prevailed; but when he let it down, ‘Amalek prevailed. <sup>12</sup> However, Moshe’s hands grew heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Aharon and Hur held up his hands, the one on the one side and the other on the other; so that his hands stayed steady until sunset. <sup>13</sup> Thus Y’hoshua [Joshua] defeated ‘Amalek, putting their people to the sword.

The Amalekites, descendants of Amalek, were an ancient biblical nation living near the land of Canaan. They were the first nation to attack the Jewish people after the Exodus from Egypt, and they are seen as the archetypal enemy of the Jews. The nation of Amalek is long gone, but they live on as the internal enemies that we each battle on a daily basis.

Who was Amalek? Eliphaz, son of Esau (the patriarch Jacob’s brother and sworn enemy), and his concubine Timna had a child named Amalek. Amalek grew up in Esau’s household, imbibing Esau’s pathological hatred of Jacob’s descendants along the way. His offspring became the nation of Amalek, and they lived to the south of the Land of Israel, in what is now known as the Negev Desert.

After the Jewish people crossed the Red Sea, they encamped in Rephidim. The people thirsted for water, and God provided a miraculous well of water to accompany them on their journeys.

While the Jews were still at Rephidim, recuperating from their escape from Egypt, the nation of Amalek, who were a mighty and fierce people, well-trained in the art of warfare, suddenly launched a vicious surprise attack on them—though the Jews had no designs on Amalekite territory and were not even headed in that direction. It was an unprovoked and cowardly attack upon a tired and weary people, just liberated from slavery, on their way to their homeland.

Moses commanded Joshua to take an elite troop of soldiers into battle the next day. Moses himself ascended a nearby mountain, with his staff in his hand and accompanied by Aaron and Hur, to pray for God's salvation. When Moses' hands were raised, Joshua and the armies would win. When Moses' arms would lower because of fatigue, they would begin to lose. So Aaron and Hur stood beside Moses and held his hands up for the duration of the battle.

The battle lasted a whole day until the Amalekites were finally their strongest warriors were defeated and the others were allowed to return home.

Following the battle, God commanded Moses to record the story of Amalek's treacherous attack for posterity, and to enjoin Moses' future successor, Joshua, to remember the attack as well. God promised to completely wipe out the memory of Amalek — the incarnation of all evil — from the earth, and to wage an eternal war with Amalek in every generation. God swore that His name and throne would not be complete until Amalek was destroyed.

Forty years later, as the Jews stood poised to enter the Land of Israel, Moses reminded the Jews of the command to combat Amalek. In the fortieth year of the Jews' wandering in the desert, Aaron, the high priest, passed on. The protective clouds of glory that surrounded the Jewish camp disappeared, as they were present only in Aaron's merit. Seeing the exposed encampment, the Canaanite king of Arad launched a savage attack against the Jews.

The sages explain that the king of Arad and his army were actually Amalekites who had merely disguised themselves as Canaanites before entering battle. They wanted to confuse the Jews about their attackers' identity. While the Jews would pray to God for salvation from Canaanites, the Amalekites would be free to do whatever they pleased.

The plan backfired. The Jews were victorious, and went on to enter the Land of Israel unimpeded by the Amalekites.

The Torah lists two mitzvahs [teachings] regarding Amalek:

1. To obliterate the nation of Amalek.
2. To never forget the evil deeds Amalek did.

The mitzvah to destroy Amalek implies that no trace of Amalek's existence could be left. "Nothing," explain the sages, "could serve as a reminder of Amalek's name—not even an animal about which it could be said, 'This animal belonged to Amalek.'"

The first Jewish king, Saul, was commanded by the prophet Samuel to finally wipe out Amalek. Saul was victorious against the Amalekites, but spared the choicest of their flocks and the Amalekite king, Agag.

When Samuel found out about Saul's disobedience, Saul lost his right to kingship. Samuel then killed Agag himself.

However, before he was killed, Agag sired a child who would keep Amalek's lineage alive. Some 500 years later, one of this child's descendants was Haman the Agagite, of Purim fame.

The Torah commands us to always remember what Amalek did. Once a year, Jews are admonished to read the verses of the Torah where Moses reminds the Jews of Amalek's actions. Each year on the Shabbat before the holiday of Purim the section of the Torah in Deuteronomy recounting Amalek's action is read aloud. On Purim the Jews were saved from the evil designs of the wicked Haman, a descendant of the Amalekite king Agag—a perfect time to celebrate the destruction of Amalek.

<sup>14</sup> Adonai said to Moshe, "Write this in a book to be remembered, and tell it to Y'hoshua [Joshua]: I will completely blot out any memory of 'Amalek from under heaven." <sup>15</sup> Moshe built an altar, called it Adonai Nissi [Adonai is my banner/miracle],

Adonai Nissi: The Lord is my Banner!

This is a new name given for God. After the battle, Moses set up an altar and gave a sacrifice of thanksgiving to Adonai Nissi. When Israel faced the Amalekites in battle at Rephidim it wasn't with overwhelming force, an experienced army, or the best commanders. It was as a transient tribe of herdsman escaping slavery in Egypt and travelling uncertainly to a promised land they hadn't seen in over four hundred years. They were trespassers travelling through the lands of fierce fighting peoples. They travelled with women, children, herds, and all their possessions. The battle was for survival, for hope, for a future.

But they travelled with something else too, something else that no other nation on earth had – a pillar of fire, a cloud of smoke, the very presence of God. Israel did not fight its battles alone. No matter how inexperienced or overmatched they were they were never the underdogs. No matter how desperate they felt they were never at a loss. The great general, the perfect protector, the LORD was with them. The very name used in Scripture is Jehovah Nissi - "the Lord is my banner"

<sup>16</sup> and said, "Because their hand was against the throne of Yah, Adonai will fight 'Amalek generation after generation."

I want to go into that last phrase a little. In Hebrew it's worded a little different than English translations word it. I've used the Complete Jewish Bible here for this reason, but a few other versions say in vs 16:

KJV: Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

NKJV: "Because the Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

NASB: "The Lord has sworn; the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation."

NIV: "Because hands were lifted up against the throne of the Lord, the Lord will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation."

NIRV: "The Amalekites opposed the authority of the Lord. So the Lord will fight against the Amalekites for all time to come."

In Hebrew (read right to left), the phrase says:

- hand
- throne
- YAH
- war
- YAHWEH
- Amalek



You will notice that the Lord’s name is used twice, but in the first one it’s just YAH (yod, hey) – just a part of God’s name. The second mention has YAHWEH, the full name (yod, hey, vav, hey).

In this God is saying that a part of Him is missing from His throne, and it will be missing until Amalek is destroyed.

When was Amalek completely destroyed? Has Amalek been completely destroyed? We know several times throughout the Bible and history of times when the generations have had to deal with another Amalek. Some scholars say that in every generation there’s an Amalek waiting to destroy the Jewish people.

There’s another level though...a more personal level we can see here. There’s an Amalek lurking in everyone, all people, from generation to generation.

Deuteronomy 25:17-19 (CJB)

<sup>17</sup> “Remember what ‘Amalek did to you on the road as you were coming out of Egypt, <sup>18</sup> how he met you by the road, attacked those in the rear, those who were exhausted and straggling behind when you were tired and weary. He did not fear God. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, when Adonai your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies in the land Adonai your God is giving you as your inheritance to possess, you are to blot out all memory of ‘Amalek from under heaven. Don’t forget!

In Hebrew the word LIMIT means to scratch out or to erase. We see it in this scripture in that part of God’s name is scratched out or erased from the scripture. In Psalms 78:41 it says the people limited the Holy one of Israel:

<sup>40</sup> How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!

<sup>41</sup> Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>42</sup> They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

We can limit God. God says we are to blot out or limit all the names of the gods of the lands, but not to do it to His name. Here in this scripture in Psalms it talks about how they were scratching out God’s name.

If we go back to Exodus 17, we see that God’s name is used twice, and once it is partially scratched out – or limited. The first mention it is just YOD HEY, minus the VAV HEY.

What does Amalek have to do with limiting God?

The Hebrew word used in Deuteronomy 15 where it says Amalek met them on the road is the word Karka. It can also be translated as cooled. Amalek’s goal is to cool you down. The Israelites had a fiery passion to follow God after all He had taken them through to this point, and then Amalek shows up to cool that passion.

## Numbers 24:20 Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)

<sup>20</sup> He saw 'Amalek and made this pronouncement: "First among nations was 'Amalek, but destruction will be its end."

Amalek was the first of the nations to attack the Jewish people. He was unaffected by the heat of their passion. He brazenly came out to attack them when they were just traveling through. It's like he wanted to apply a cold burst of water onto their hot enthusiasm. Amalek wanted to take revenge on this nation for the loss of the blessing from generations ago [ie – Jacob and Esau].

It is because their goal was to cool the passion that we are told to eliminate them from the face of the earth and to never forget the lesson of them.

## Revelation 3:14-16 (CJB)

<sup>14</sup> "To the angel of the Messianic Community in Laodicea, write: 'Here is the message from the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the Ruler of God's creation: <sup>15</sup> "I know what you are doing: you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! <sup>16</sup> So, because you are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth!

If you are passionate hot and this cold water gets poured onto you, you become lukewarm.

Amalek represents that cold rationality which makes us question everything we do or experience in our walk with God, bringing in doubt. If satan can get us to doubt the miracles God has done for us, and the journey we have taken, and the small things that God has provided even for our basic needs, then satan wins. It is a cold water poured on our passion. It cools us to the point that we no longer want to tell others about what God has done. It brings doubt into our lives, and it limits God's ability to work in our lives in the future.

In Hebrew each letter represents a number as well. And just like in algebra, if the numbers of one word add up to the numbers of another word, then they can be interchanged. When you add up the numbers represented with the word AMALEK, you get: 100+30+40+70=240. Another word that when added together equals 240 is the word DOUBT: 100+80+60=240. So in Hebrew, AMALEK = DOUBT.

It is this doubt that will stop their journey. It is this doubt that makes them doubt that God cares, that God can handle everything, and even to a point, that God has even been working from the beginning. This is why God makes a point throughout this story to tell them to write it down, memorize it, and tell it to their children and their children's children from generation to generation. God knows the power of that word. Satan does too, and he tries to throw doubt on every word of the Bible. No other book has come under a much scrutiny or fire as the Bible has from the beginning.

Purpose for this week's lesson: Don't let satan cool your passion for God!