

Deuteronomy 32:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

Analysis

For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges—Moses contrasts Israel's God with pagan deities, declaring Yahweh's incomparable superiority. The Hebrew *ki lo khe-tsureinu tsuram* (כִּי לֹא כְצוּרֵנוּ צוּרָם), 'for not like our Rock their rock') uses wordplay on *tsur* (צוּר)—Israel's Rock is the living God, while pagan 'rocks' are lifeless idols. This echoes 1 Samuel 2:2: 'There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.'

The stunning phrase *ve-oyveinu pelilim* (וְאֹיְבֵינוּ פְּלִילִים, 'and our enemies are judges') means even Israel's pagan adversaries recognize Yahweh's superiority. *Pelilim* (arbiters, judges) indicates those competent to evaluate evidence. When enemies defeat Israel, they don't attribute victory to their gods' power but recognize they've overcome a people whose God abandoned them (v. 30). This unwilling testimony from hostile witnesses validates Yahweh's uniqueness.

Biblical examples abound: Rahab confessed Israel's God caused Canaanite hearts to melt (Joshua 2:9-11); Philistines feared Israel's God after Dagon fell before the ark (1 Samuel 5:7); Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged 'the Most High rules the kingdom of men' (Daniel 4:34-37); Cyrus confessed Yahweh gave him kingdoms (Ezra 1:2). Even enemies testify to our Rock's uniqueness, demonstrating God's sovereignty extends over those who don't worship Him.

Historical Context

Throughout ancient Near Eastern history, pagan nations implicitly acknowledged Yahweh's distinction. When Assyria conquered northern Israel (722 BC), they had to import Israelite priests to teach 'the manner of the God of the land' because lions attacked their settlers (2 Kings 17:25-28). After Babylon conquered Judah (586 BC), Nebuchadnezzar promoted Daniel and confessed Israel's God as 'God of gods' (Daniel 2:47). Persian king Cyrus decreed temple rebuilding, acknowledging Yahweh 'charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem' (Ezra 1:2). Roman centurion at Jesus' cross confessed, 'Truly this was the Son of God' (Matthew 27:54). These testimonies from pagans validate Moses' assertion—even enemies judge that our Rock surpasses their rocks.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does enemy testimony to Yahweh's uniqueness provide powerful apologetic evidence for God's reality?
2. What does the contrast between the living Rock (God) and dead rocks (idols) teach about the nature of true deity?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	לֹא	צוֹרָם	צוֹרָם	וְאֵיבֵינוּ
H3588	H3808	For their rock	For their rock	even our enemies
		H6697	H6697	H341

פְּלִילִים:

themselves being judges

H6414

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 14:25 (Parallel theme): And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

1 Samuel 4:8 (Parallel theme): Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

1 Samuel 2:2 (Parallel theme): There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

Daniel 2:47 (Parallel theme): The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.