

Exodus 33:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:

Analysis

And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock—The rock's cleft (נִקְרָת הַצּוֹר, niqrat hatsur) becomes a protective refuge. God's hand (כַּפִּי, kappi) covers the opening until the glory passes. This intimate protection—God's own hand shielding Moses—shows tender care in the midst of overwhelming holiness. The cleft represents Christ, our hiding place (Colossians 3:3: 'your life is hid with Christ in God'). The hymn 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee' captures this theology. Only by hiding in Christ can we survive encountering divine glory.

Historical Context

Rocky mountain terrain provided natural shelters. Ancient peoples understood clefts as refuges from storms and enemies. This physical reality becomes a powerful spiritual metaphor throughout psalms and prophets (Psalm 18:2, Isaiah 32:2).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. In what ways is Christ your 'clefth in the rock' that allows you to experience God's glory safely?
2. How does God's protective hand over Moses illustrate His care in managing what He reveals to you?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁמַת יְהִי עָבָרִי כִּי בְּכָד
H1961 I pass by And it shall come to pass while my glory that I will put
H5674 H3519 H7760

עַד עַל יְהִי כַּפֵּר בְּנֵקֶב תְּ
thee in a clift of the rock and will cover thee with my hand while
H5366 H6697 H5526 H3709 H5921 H5704

עָבָרִי
I pass by
H5674

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 91:1 (Parallel theme): He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Isaiah 2:21 (Glory): To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

Psalms 91:4 (Parallel theme): He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

Isaiah 32:2 (Parallel theme): And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

1 Corinthians 10:4 (Parallel theme): And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Psalms 18:2 (Parallel theme): The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

2 Corinthians 5:19 (Parallel theme): To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Deuteronomy 33:12 (Parallel theme): And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

Song of Solomon 2:3: As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.