

Psalms 114:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

Analysis

Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters. The psalm concludes with another wilderness miracle: water from rock. This completes the psalm's survey of God's supernatural provision during Israel's redemption journey—Exodus deliverance, sea crossing, Jordan crossing, and now water from stone.

"Which turned" (הָפַךְ/hahofekhi) uses haphak, meaning transform, overturn, change completely. This isn't minor alteration but radical transformation—rock's very nature reversed. What normally produces nothing becomes source of life-giving water. Only Creator can override natural laws, transforming substances at will.

"The rock" (הַצּוֹר/hatzur) and "the flint" (שָׁלָמִים/challamish) are parallel terms emphasizing hardness, impermeability. Tzur means cliff, rock, stronghold. Challamish specifically means flint—hardest stone, used for tools and weapons. Both terms stress impossibility: these aren't porous stones but utterly unyielding substances. Water from flint is absurdly impossible apart from divine intervention.

"Into a standing water" (לְאַגָּם-מַיִם/la'agam mayim) describes water pooling, collecting, standing ready for use. This wasn't brief trickle but sustained supply. Agam suggests pool, pond, collected waters—sufficient quantity for entire nation plus livestock.

"A fountain of waters" (לְמַעַיִן/lema'yeno mayim) intensifies the image. Ma'yan means spring, fountain, flowing source. This wasn't stagnant pool but flowing fountain, fresh and abundant. God provided not just survival minimum but generous abundance—pools and fountains from flint.

The miracle occurred twice: at Rephidim early in wilderness journey (Exodus 17:1-7) and at Kadesh near journey's end (Numbers 20:1-11). Both times, people complained; both times, God graciously provided. The psalm celebrates this provision, demonstrating God's faithful care throughout the wilderness generation.

Historical Context

Water scarcity was Ancient Near East's primary survival challenge. Desert regions required knowledge of springs, wells, and oases. Armies' success depended on securing water sources. Caravan routes followed water availability. Thus water from rock represented not minor convenience but survival miracle for two million people plus livestock in desert wilderness.

At Rephidim, people quarreled with Moses: "Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" (Exodus 17:3). God commanded Moses to strike Horeb's rock with staff—same staff used in Egypt's plagues and Red Sea crossing. Water gushed forth abundantly. The place was named Massah and Meribah (testing and quarreling) because Israel tested God.

At Kadesh, near wilderness wandering's end, people again complained about water (Numbers 20:2-5). God instructed Moses to speak to rock. Instead, Moses struck it twice in anger, saying "Must WE fetch water from this rock?" (Numbers 20:10). Water flowed, but Moses's disobedience cost him Promised Land entrance. The repeated miracle demonstrated God's faithfulness despite human failure.

Paul interprets these events typologically: "they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4). Christ is the Rock from which life-giving water flows. At crucifixion, Christ was "struck" (pierced), producing water and blood (John 19:34). Now He offers living water to all who

thirst (John 7:37-39). The Spirit flows from the Rock who was struck.

Isaiah prophesied similar provision: "he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out" (Isaiah 48:21). This physical miracle points to spiritual reality: God provides abundantly from impossible sources. What appears barren and unyielding becomes fountain of life when God intervenes.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What 'rocks' or impossibly hard situations in your life need God's transforming power to become sources of life and blessing?
2. How does water from rock demonstrate God's ability to provide abundantly beyond natural means or human expectations?
3. What is the significance of Paul identifying the Rock as Christ, and how does this deepen understanding of both Exodus miracle and Jesus's sacrifice?
4. How should remembering God's past faithfulness (water from rock) encourage trust during present difficulties?

Interlinear Text

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| למְעִינוֹ | מִלְמָעִין | וְשָׁעַר | אֶגְמָן | מִים: | אֶגְמָן | וְרָאֵב | הַהֲפַךְ | וְרָאֵב |
| Which turned | the rock | into a standing | of waters | the flint | the flint | the fountain | | |
| H2015 | H6697 | H98 | H4325 | H2496 | | | | H4599 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| : מִם | | | | | | | | |
| of waters | | | | | | | | |
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Additional Cross-References

Psalms 107:35 (Parallel theme): He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.

Deuteronomy 8:15 (Parallel theme): Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

Numbers 20:11 (Parallel theme): And Moses 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.

Psalms 105:41 (Parallel theme): He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river.

Exodus 17:6 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

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.

Nehemiah 9:15 (Parallel theme): And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.
