

# Rock my World

By Mary Kane

When my oldest son was just a little guy, before he could string together words to make sentences, Erik collected rocks. When we took our afternoon walk I carried Erik's special rock collecting basket; it was far too heavy for his little arms to carry. While we walked Erik searched for rocks. Not any old rock would do...it had to be unusual in appearance, texture or shape. Erik especially loved rocks that had flecks of quartz or granite in them.

For years the rock basket sat on our front porch or in the garage. When he grew big enough, Erik's brother Scott hunted for rocks as well. Some rocks were painted and added to my flower gardens. Other rocks decorated Erik's bookshelves, sitting next to his Lego's, turtle shells and racecars. Eventually other interests replaced rock collecting. As a sentimental mother I couldn't bear to get rid of my son's rock collection so I added it to the landscaping rocks in my front yard.

Little boys aren't the only ones interested in rocks—the Bible says that wise men are on the lookout for rocks as well. The Old Testament and the New Testament both reference rocks and stones. Let's take an in depth look at some of these references.

Before we start today's study, please pray and ask for the Holy Spirit to fill you afresh and open the eyes of your heart to His Holy Word.

Now, please read 2 Samuel 22:1-4.

**Who wrote this song (verse 1)?**

**What three words did David use to describe God (verse 2)?**

He called God his fortress, his deliverer and his rock. The Hebrew word for rock is *sela'* which refers to a rock, a cliff or a crag. In ancient times fortresses or cities were built upon rocky mountaintops as an added measure of security. Rocks were also used as tools or weapons. As a part of Hebrew worship, rocks were used to build altars on which animals were sacrificed for the sins of the people. Large rocks also provided shelter from danger and shade from the heat of the sun. Important events of national concern or laws and regulations were engraved upon rocks called *steles*, which were erected like ancient billboards for all to read and remember.

Glance back at our verses again. Why would king David be so interested in Rocks? Why in particular would he call God *my Rock*? What is the connection between rocks, deliverance and his God? To answer all these questions we must turn to 1 Samuel. If you have never read the account of David and Goliath please read 1 Samuel 17. If you are familiar with the account of David and Goliath, please read 1 Samuel 17:43-49.

**In verse 45 David stated that Goliath came to meet him with what weapons?**

**But with what *weapon* did David actually arm himself?**

Despite the fact that David picked up five smooth stones from a stream, David tells Goliath that he is coming at him in the name of the Lord God of Israel.

**In verse 50 God allowed David victory over Goliath by using a**

\_\_\_\_\_.

David did not win this battle because he was bigger, smarter, stronger, better equipped or a more seasoned warrior than Goliath. David won this battle because he placed his faith not in the rocks but in the Rock. The word used for *rock* in verse 50 is different from the word we previously studied. This time the writer chose the Hebrew word *'eben* which refers to stones

used as weapons, tools or jewels. 'Eben is derived from the primitive root word *banah* which means to build, to establish, *to rebuild* (emphasis mine). After the disastrous reign of King Saul, God anointed David as king and was working to *rebuild* His kingdom through David, the man after His own heart.

Now let's study another important stone from the Old Testament. Please read Exodus 24:9-12.

**What did God give to Moses?**

**On what were the Ten Commandments written?**

**Why do you think God choose to write the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone?**

Scrolls of parchment, papyrus or animal skin would have been far easier to transport than stone tablets. But stone is durable; it will not wilt, melt, crumble or mold over time. Perhaps God chose tablets of stone because the keeping of keeping the Law is a heavy responsibility and everyone is crushed under it's weight. It is through the impossible task of keeping the law that all man is convicted of sin and the need for a Savior. It is because of the Ten Commandments that two other stone structures were initiated as part of process of atonement for sin. Please look up the following verses and record those two structures in the spaces provided.

**Deuteronomy 27:5-6 and Exodus 20:25:**

**1 Kings 6:7 and Haggai 2:15**

Altars of sacrifice were built of stones that had not been touched by an iron tool. According to Mathew Henry, Jesus is "our altar, a *stone cut out of the mountain without hands* (Dan. 2:34) and therefore *refused by the builders*, as having no form or comeliness, but accepted of God the Father, and made the head of the cornerstone."

The temple of God was also built of stone, but the stones used for the temple were dressed stones. In order to keep the work site of the temple peaceful the stones were dressed at another location and then transported to the temple site. Matthew Henry states that our God is a God of peace and order and that His work should be completed with as little clamor as possible.

All that remains of the temple today is about 350 meters of the Western Wall. It is believed that the immense stones of the lowest layers are stones original to Solomon's Temple. One of these mammoth stones 60x3x4 meters weighs approximately four hundred tons.

Now let us turn our attention to the New Testament and take an in-depth look at our subject matter for today.

Please read the verse below verse and record what you learn about rocks.

### **1 Corinthians 10: 1-4**

Jesus is the Rock of our salvation from whom flows streams of life-giving water. He is the rock on which we build the foundation of our lives. He is the Rock from which we seek protection. He is our fortress; our hiding place. He shields us and shades us from harm. He is the tool God uses to form and shape us. He is the Rock God sets us upon when He pulls us out of the miry clay.

**How has Jesus been a rock for you?**

**How has he shielded, protected and shaped you?**

In the Old Testament we learned that God wrote His Law on tablets of stone. Even though tablets of stone were very durable, they were also very awkward to transport. God has a different plan for the giving of His law to New Testament believers however.

**According to Jeremiah 31: 31-33, where does God write the law of His New Covenant?**

He writes it on the minds and hearts of His people. Aren't you glad that the keeping of the law of God involves the heart as well as the mind? God wrote His Law on our hearts so we would obey Him out of the love we have for Him. Only love for God will keep us walking in obedience to Him through hardships, trials and the storms of life. God's word says that all of the law and the teaching of the prophets hang on one great commandment; that we love the Lord our God with all our *heart*, soul and mind. Following God is not exclusively about conforming to rules, obeying commandments, and keeping statutes; the motivation behind these activities must be a deep and abiding love. It's all about love. That is why we pray, "God give me a *heart* for You," not "Lord, give me a mind for You." If our heart is right our mind will follow.

The Hebrew word for *put* used in verse 33 is *nathan* which means to entrust, to yield produce, a miracle, to turn the heart, to yoke, to devote oneself to something. From the definition of *nathan* we can infer that God miraculously wrote His law upon our hearts so that we will:

1. Turn to Him and find eternal life and salvation,
2. Control our sinful desires and follow Him,
3. Reap a harvest of righteousness, and
4. Devote our selves to following Him.

As we learned previously in the Old Testament portion of this study, altars and the temple were constructed of stone. How do these concepts apply to a New Testament believer? Please read Ephesians 2:19-22 and 2 Peter 2:4-5.

**According to these verses, who is the Chief Cornerstone and the Living Rock?**

**Who are the living rocks, the substance of the temple?**

Jesus is the chief Cornerstone and we are the living stones. And together we are growing into the holy temple, the dwelling place of God's Holy Presence. In the Old Testament, God laid out His plan for the construction of the temple in 2 Chronicles 3-4 and 1 Kings 5-6. In order to be acceptable for the habitation of our Great Yahweh, the temple had to be built according to His exact specifications. The temple of stone was the only way man could approach God; man could not approach God by building a stone temple of his own design.

**Please read 2 Chronicles 7:1-3 and try to imagine the events of these verses happening before your eyes. What happened when God found the temple acceptable (made exactly according to His plan)?**

When the sanctification of the temple was completed through the sacrifice of oxen and sheep on the altar (2 Chronicles 5:6) and found acceptable, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering. And the glory of the Lord filled the temple. Can you imagine?

**Turning our attention to the New Testament, what was the "altar" upon which the Lamb of God was sacrificed?**

The cross. The wonderful cross. Jesus the Lamb of God was sacrificed upon this wooden altar so we can boldly approach our all-powerful, magnificent God seated upon the throne of grace. Jesus, the Lamb of God, is God's New Testament plan for the acceptable sacrifice through which He must be approached.

**And what happened when God found this sacrifice acceptable (Acts 2:1-4)?**

Fire fell from heaven and filled the *temples/bodies* (1 Corinthians 6:19) of the apostles. And the glory of the Lord filled the temple. Amazing.

Let's try to summarize what we have learned today by filling in the Old/New Testament Stone Chart.

Old/New Testament Stones	
OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT
Law written on stone tablets	Law written on _____
God our Rock and Redeemer	Jesus is the _____
Temple built of stone	Church built of _____

In closing, God is our Rock and Redeemer; Jesus is the Living Rock from whom flows a stream of abundant life. Jesus is the Rock that shields, shades, protects and shapes us. On the altar of the cross, Jesus sacrificed His life for us that God may fill our temples with His Holy Presence. Upon the tablets of our hearts God has written His law that we might turn from our sinful ways, find eternal life, follow Him, love Him, devote our lives to Him and reap a harvest of righteousness.

**What has touched you the most about today's study?**

Thank you very much for joining me for Bible study.

*“I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me and heard  
my cry.*

*He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of miry clay,  
And set my feet upon a rock, and established my footsteps.”*

*Psalm 40:1-2*

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