JESUS IS THE ROCK OF AGES
I Corinthians 10:1-4 (NKJV)

Please turn with me to tonight's scripture text in First Corinthians, the tenth chapter, and let's read verses 1-4.

1 Corinthians 10:1-4 (NKJV)

1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea,

2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 all ate the same spiritual food,

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

PRAYER

Introduction

ILLUSTRATION

Rob Cutshaw of Andrews, North Carolina is known by the locals as “a rock hound.” Cutshaw hunts for rocks, then sells them to collectors or jewelers for cash. Although he doesn’t claim to be an “expert on rocks,” Cutshaw admits he has a pretty keen eye for knowing which rocks will sell and which one’s won’t.

That wasn’t always the case. Back in the 1960's Cutshaw found a rock he described as “purdy and big” that he thought might be worth something, but no one would buy it from him.

Cutshaw said he put the rock in his closet and forgot about for over twenty years. One day while going through some things in that closet he came across the long forgotten rock. Needing some cash to pay his bills, Cutshaw decided to try to sell the rock one more time. He admits he was willing to take a few lousy dollars just to get rid of it.
Imagine Cutshaw's surprise when he learned that “the purdy big blue rock” he had stored in a closet for two decades turned out to be the world's largest sapphire, now known as the “The Star of David.” It is worth two and three quarter million dollars.

ROCKS are often an over-looked part of nature unless you happen to hit one when you are hoeing your garden or one hits your windshield while you're driving down the road or you get a little rock in your shoe.

Maybe at some time or another you have used a rock to hammer down a tent peg on a camping trip ..........or skipped a rock across a pond.........or maybe you've picked up a rock to scare off a strange dog that wandered into your yard.

How many of you remember the “Pet Rock” craze years ago? OK, how many of you are brave enough to admit you actually owned “a pet rock?”

Plymouth Rock........The Rock of Gibraltar.......the Blarney Stone.......The Rosetta Stone...........these are just a few of the greatest rocks in the world.

But for a few minutes this evening I would like for us to think about “the greatest rock of all” and that is JESUS CHRIST: THE ROCK OF AGES.

In our scripture text, the apostle Paul is continuing with the thoughts he began back in chapter nine, verses 24-27, about “striving for a Crown.” And in this section he compares our journey as Christians as being similar to the journey the children of Israel took through the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land.
In these first four verses of chapter 10, we see four blessings the Israelites received on their journey that foreshadowed the blessings we now enjoy on our own journey.

(A) First, was the blessing of **Salvation**.

v. 1  “all our fathers were under the cloud.”

The “cloud” is symbolic of God’s salvation.

*The Israelites were saved from out of the land of Egypt.*

*We have been saved from out of the world.*

(B) Second, was the blessing of **Baptism**.

v. 1, 2a  “all passed through the sea.” “all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.”

Baptism essentially identifies us as God’s people.

*For the Israelites, “being baptized” meant passing through the Red Sea, which identified them as followers of Moses.*

*For us, “being baptized” means being immersed to be identified as followers of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 3:27 “For as many of you as has been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.”)*
(C) Third, was the blessing of the **LORD'S SUPPER.**

vs. 3, 4a  "all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink."

* For the Israelites, the "spiritual food" was the manna from heaven. And the "spiritual drink" was the water miraculously provided from the rock. (Exodus 16- "manna;"  Exodus 17- "water from the rock.")

* For us, the "spiritual food" is the bread which is symbolic of Christ's body, and the "spiritual drink" is the fruit of the vine which is symbolic of Christ's blood." (I Corinthians 11:23-26)

Now this next blessing that we share with the ancient Israelites is most interesting.

(D) Fourth, was the blessing of the **ABIDING PRESENCE OF THE ROCK OF AGES.**

v. 4b  *For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*

What an amazing revelation! Christ, "the rock of ages" was spiritually present with Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness.

*Christ provided the **LIVING WATER** for the Israelites as they traveled through the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land. And Christ is our **LIVING WATER** as we travel through the wilderness of this world on our way to our "Promised Land," our heavenly home.
I would like to continue along this same line of thinking Paul has introduced in these verses, and have you consider three ways in which Jesus is our “Rock of Ages.”

I. Jesus is the Rock of Our Salvation

1. Listen to these beautiful passages that describe Christ as “the rock of our salvation.”

   PSALM 18:2 says, “The LORD is my Rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my Shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

   PSALM 62:1,2 says, “Truly my soul silently waits for God; from Him comes my salvation. He alone is my ROCK and my SALVATION; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.

   PSALM 95:1 says “Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the ROCK of our SALVATION.”

2. There are two Hebrew words for “rock” in the Old Testament.

   - One is the word, TSUR which speaks of a rock that can range in size from a pebble to a boulder.

   - The other word is SELA which describes a much larger rock like a mountain.

3. When the scriptures refer to the LORD as “the rock of our salvation” the word “sela” is used. Jesus is the MOUNTAIN of our salvation!

4. Most all of us has stood on a mountain. A mountain is immovable! You can put all your weight on it! You can jump up and down on it! And you’re NOT going to move it!

5. Jesus is the immovable rock of our salvation! When we put all our weight on Jesus, when we lean upon Him for our salvation, we will NOT be moved!
6. Think of the billions of people in this world who are trusting in someone or something other than JESUS CHRIST for their salvation.

*BUDDHA is not the “rock of salvation.”
*CONFUCIUS is not the “rock of salvation.”
*THE POPE is not the “rock of salvation.”
*MONEY is not the “rock of salvation.”
*POWER is not the “rock of salvation.”
*GOOD WORKS is not “the rock of salvation.”
*GOOD MORALS is not “the rock of salvation.”

7. Only those who put all their faith and all their trust in JESUS CHRIST, THE ROCK OF SALVATION will be saved!

But not only is JESUS THE ROCK OF OUR SALVATION

II. Jesus Is The ROCK of Our STRENGTH

PSALM 62:7,8 says, “In God is my salvation and my glory; the ROCK of my STRENGTH, and my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him; GOD is a REFUGE for us.”

PSALM 84:5a says, “Blessed is the man whose strength is in YOU.”

ISAIAH 40:31 says, “But those who wait upon the LORD shall RENEW THEIR STRENGTH; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:13 says, “I can do all things through CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME.”
ILLUSTRATION

A preacher in Iowa was preaching a sermon on that text I just read from Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through CHRIST who strengthens me.”

To illustrate the meaning of that verse, he had several children come down front. One by one he had each of the children try to jump across the aisle from the front pew to the pew on the other side of the aisle. They could jump one, two or even three feet, but none of them was able to jump all the way across the aisle.

When it got down to the last little girl, the preacher told her to count to three and jump. On the count of three, the preacher put his hands under the little girl’s armpits and as she jumped, he lifted her up and carried her all the way across the aisle to the other pew.

The preacher said, “See, she did it!” The other children said, “No she didn’t, you carried her.”

The preacher went on to explain that that is how CHRIST STRENGTHENS US.

-We can't jump out of our SINS, but CHRIST can LIFT us out of our sins.
-We can't jump into HEAVEN, but CHRIST can LIFT us into heaven.

1. In this world there are two kinds of “strength” one can rely upon: One can rely upon his own HUMAN strength or one can rely upon the STRENGTH of the LORD, the “Rock of Ages.”

2. The Bible commands us to live victoriously over sin. How can we do that apart from Christ, “The Rock of Our Strength?”

The Bible commands us to to be “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.” How can we do that apart from Christ, “The Rock of our strength?”

The Bible commands us to love our brothers and to even love our enemies. How can we do that apart from Christ, “The Rock of Our Strength?”

The Bible commands us to overcome the world. How can we do that apart from Christ, “The Rock of Our Strength?”

The Bible commands us to “be faithful unto death.” How can we do that apart from Christ, “The Rock of Our Strength?”
3. All of nature depends upon hidden resources. The great trees send their roots deep into the ground to draw up water and minerals. The mighty rivers get their strength from the snow-capped mountains.

4. Likewise, as Christians, our strength comes from a hidden resource. We get our strength from Jesus Christ, “the Rock of our Strength.”

Jesus is the Rock of Our Salvation.

Jesus is the Rock of Our Strength.

And thirdly...........

III. Jesus Is The Rock of Our Security

Turn with me to those familiar parable of Jesus in Matthew 7:24, 25.

Matthew 7:24, 25 (NKJV)

24 Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

1. Jesus is teaching us that the person who hears the teachings of Christ, and practices what he hears, is like “the wise man who built his house upon the Rock of Security.”

-He is not content to just HEAR about repentance. He actually repents!
-He is not content to just HEAR about obedience. He actually obeys!
-He is not content to just HEAR about holy living, He actually lives a holy life!
2. And what is the result? In the time of life's trials, his relationship with JESUS CHRIST becomes a rock solid foundation to help him withstand life's storms. What does that mean on a practical level? It means..........

- You may go through the storms of **SICKNESS** or **DISEASE**, but you will not be destroyed, because your life is built on **JESUS, THE ROCK OF SECURITY**.

- It means that if you go through the storm of **FINANCIAL DISASTER** and lose your life's savings or everything you own, you will not be destroyed, because your life is built on **JESUS, THE ROCK OF SECURITY**.

- It means you may go through some storms of **FAMILY PROBLEMS** but you will not be destroyed because your life is built on **JESUS, THE ROCK OF SECURITY**.

- It means you may, and certainly will, go through the storms of **GRIEF** and **SORROW** and **DEATH ITSELF**, but you will not be destroyed, because your life is built on **JESUS, THE ROCK OF SECURITY**.

3. When we build our lives on JESUS CHRIST, we can withstand anything life throws at us because **JESUS IS THE ROCK OF OUR SECURITY**.
CONCLUSION

There is no greater term to describe immoveable......unshakeable......in-destructible nature of JESUS CHRIST than “Rock of Ages.”

-He is the ROCK upon which the foundation of the Church was laid.
-He is the CHIEF CORNERSTONE upon which our lives are laid.
-He is the STONE that the builder rejected.

Sinful man nailed Him to the cross, and even though He died, and was buried, He arose again on the third day. HE COULD NOT BE DESTROYED, FOR HE IS “THE ROCK OF AGES.”

The question I want to leave you with this morning is this: Is Jesus Your “Rock of Ages?”

Are you building your life on JESUS, “The Rock of Salvation?”
Are you building your life on JESUS, “The Rock of Strength?”
Are you building your life on JESUS, “The Rock of Security?”

ROCK OF AGES, CLEFT FOR ME, LET ME HIDE MYSELF IN THEE!