

SPEAKERS

September 5 - Ken Storm
Holy Communion

September 12 - Charles Korhonen

September 19 - Ken Storm

September 26 - Nathan Ruonavaara - Potluck Meal following service

CHURCH SCHEDULE

Sunday School/Adult Bible Study - Starting Sept. 12
10:00 a.m.

Sunday Service:
11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study:
7:00 p.m.

CONTACT

Website:
www.tapiolachurch.org

Location:
17602 N. Lake Ave., Tapiola,
MI 49916
(906) 334-2766

Mailing: P.O. Box 531,
Houghton, MI 49931

Contact: Ken Storm, Pastor
(906) 482-3234

The Rock of Horeb

“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” - Exodus 17:6

The children of God were journeying from Egypt toward the Promised Land according to the Word of God, led by pillars of cloud and fire, yet they came to a place which had no water. How could this happen? They had just experienced the great power of God that released them from bondage, but a short time later He seemed incapable of protecting them from troubles along the pathway that He was revealing to them to travel on. They began to doubt His intentions. What were they to do?

This was not the first time they had run into trouble. When the Israelites first left Egypt the people were joyful in their newfound freedom until a few days into the journey when they *“lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid”* (Exodus 14:10). Their immediate thought was that God had left them and now they were going to die. However, God had other ideas: He would destroy Pharaoh’s army in the Red Sea so *“that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord”* (Exodus 14:4) and, in turn, would show the people that He was with them. They ran into other troubles along the way as well: God sweetened up the bitter waters of Marah *“three days in the wilderness”* (Exodus 15:22) and gave them manna and quail to eat even though they *“provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness”* (Deuteronomy 9:7). Each time that God rescued the people from a troubling situation they were briefly thankful only to forget about Him until the next trouble arrived. So, it is with believers today: our faith is strongest when things go our way, but we ignore God at other times and then question Him when things get tough.

The situation near Mt. Horeb was another tough spot in their journey. They had no water and, predictably, the people again murmured against God and threatened Moses, this time with his life as he *“cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? They be almost ready to stone me”* (Exodus 17:4). It is reasonable to think that God at some point would give up on this rebellious people but we see His great patience and mercy toward provoking-sinners by giving them undeserved water out of a rock. That same patience and mercy is still on display today where God promises to open fountains of living water for anyone who truthfully calls on Him no matter where they are! Thus, our thoughts and prayers should always be directed toward Christ for He is *“the spiritual Rock”* (1 Corinthians 10:4) spoken of in our subject text.

Notice that the people did not depart from Egypt until the first Passover was instituted. And further, only those Israelites, including the *“mixed multitude”* (Exodus 12:38), who prayerfully marked *“the two side posts and... the upper door post”* (Exodus 12:7) of their houses with sacrificial blood went on this journey. It is the same way today: only those whose sins are washed away in the blood of the lamb can journey toward the Promised Land under the watchful eye of God. (Interestingly, not all who started out on this journey made it to the Promised Land.) Although the people on this journey repeatedly saw that God always provided for their needs, they never seemed to fully trust that He would continue to do so.

Today, believers are led by the indwelling Holy Spirit along a pathway lighted by the Word of God. When tribulations come our way, and they will, they may seem overwhelming at times and we too may begin to wonder in those dark periods if God is still with us. In answer to our recurring fears God simply says, “*Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day*” (Exodus 14:13). Despite their many doubts, God provided the people of our text with enough faith to trust Him at the very moment that they needed it. Throughout scripture, we find that God allows troubles to happen to His children to test their faith so that He may be glorified. Thus, we, as believers, are to fear not but to earnestly pray and trust that God is in full control of our life, every step of the way— this must we do.

God's Peace,
Charles Korhonen