289 Rock (*Petra*)

As far as can be collected from scripture, a rock is the apt thing for a foundation, in building, for fortifying in battle, or for a monument in burying.

Concerning the first, Eccli. 26[:24]: “As everlasting foundations upon a solid rock.” So, who wishes to live here solidly, it is necessary that they found themselves upon the rock Christ, 1 Cor 10[:4]: “The rock was Christ.” So, says Matt. [16:18]: “And I say to you: That you are Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church.”

¶ Explain here how “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Anything that is fixed. Therefore, just as Moses striking the rock with his rod, Exod. 17[:6]. He doubted the power of God. So, the Jewish people did not believe Christ on the cross, striking down the power of God. Rather just as the rock having been struck, water poured out to the thirsty. So, a blow of Christ was struck, life was made for the believers. These things Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, book 17, chapter 9.[[1]](#endnote-1) Ambrose in his *Hexameron*,[[2]](#endnote-2) says that the echinus a small fish during a violent storm, applies itself to a rock until the storm settles. So, man ought to stick to the rock Christ against adversities. Wherefore also David during a storm fled to a rock in the desert. Therefore, it says in 2 Kings 22[:2]: “The Lord is my rock, and my strength.” Therefore, it is said in Luke [6:48] that house founded upon a rock neither a river nor a wind could touch it.

¶ Concerning second, note that a good fortification against dogs is rock, so also spiritually against demons. Wherefore also in the figure of David thus he proceeded against Goliath, 1 Kings 17[:23]. Wherefore also he was afterward promoted to the kingdom, Psal. [26:6]: “He has exalted me upon a rock.” Therefore, Chrysostom says, *Super Mattheum*, homily 65,[[3]](#endnote-3) that any good man having constancy of faith can be called a rock. According to that of Ezech. [11:19]: “I will take away from you the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh,” etc.

Concerning the third, Matt. 27[:60], Christ was placed “in his own new monument, which he had hewed out in a rock.” So, Christ wanted to rest among them who were hewn out of the rock of penance. Wherefore the spouse says in Can. 2[:14]: Come “My dove in the clefts of the rock.” Wherefore Job 29[:6]: “The rock poured me out rivers of oil.” Wherefore Bernard, *Super Cantica*, homily 62,[[4]](#endnote-4) the clefts of the rock are the wounds of Christ. For the rock was Christ, etc.

1. Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 16.17 (PL 42:326): Sed sicut percussa petra manavit aqua sitientibus; sic plaga dominicae passionis effecta est vita credentibus. Habemus enim de hac re praeclarissimam et fidelissimam vocem Apostoli, cum inde loqueretur, dicentis, Petra autem erat Christus (I Cor. X, 4). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ambrose, *Hexameron* 5.9.24 (PL 14:216): Echinus animal exiguum, vile ac despicabile, maritimum loquor, plerumque index futurae tempestatis, [Col.0216C] aut tranquillitatis annuntius solet esse navigantibus. Denique cum procellam ventorum praesenserit, calculum validum arripit, eumque velut saburram vehit, et tamquam anchoram trahit, ne excutiatur fluctibus. Itaque non suis se librat viribus, sed alienae stabilitatis regitur pondere. Quo indicio nautae velut signum futurae perturbationis capessunt, et sibi praecavent, ne eos imparatos turbo improvisus inveniat. Qui mathematicus, qui astrologus, quive Chaldaeus sic potest siderum cursus, hos coeli motus et signa comprehendere? Quo ingenio ista collegit? Quo doctore percepit? Quis ei fuit tanti interpres augurii? Saepe homines confusionem aeris vident, et saepe falluntur, quod plerumque eam sine tempestate discutiat. Echinus non [Col.0216D] fallitur, echinum sua nequaquam signa praetereunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum ad Mattheum* homilia 31 ex cap. 13 (PG 56:793): Petra autem in se duas habet proprietates naturae, fortitudinis et duritiae. Ideo homines aut propter constantiam fidei petra dictuntur, aut propter duritiam cordis. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Bernard, *Sermones in Cantica Canticorum* 61.3 (PL 183:1071): Alius hunc locum ita exposuit, foramina petrae vulnera Christi interpretans. Recte omnino; nam petra Christus. Bona foramina, quae fidem astruunt resurrectionis et Christi divinitatem. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)