

## 1 Corinthians 10:4b

They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. (*KJV*)

1. This verse is only a problem if it is misunderstood or mistranslated. Some Trinitarians use it to teach that Christ was actually *with* the Israelites, following them around. However, the Old Testament makes no mention of Christ being with the Israelites in the wilderness. And if he had been, he certainly would not have been “following” them.

2. The word “follow” means “to go after,” and that can mean either in time or space. The Israelites did “drink,” *i.e.*, *get* nourishment, from knowing about the Christ who was to come after them. The very Trinitarian *NIV* translates the word “follow” as “accompany,” as if Jesus were accompanying the Israelites on their journey. The Greek word usually translated “follow” is *akoloutheo*. It appears in the *Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament* 90 times. Even in the *NIV* it is translated as some form of “follow” (like “follows,” “following,” *etc.*) 83 times. The *NIV* translates *akoloutheo* as “accompanied” only twice, here and in Mark 6:1, and we submit that the *NIV* does so here because of the translators’ Trinitarian bias and not because the context calls for it. Although it is true that *akoloutheo* can be translated as “accompany,” it should not be translated that way here, but would be better translated as “followed.” The vast majority of translations agree. As we have said, there is no verse in the Old Testament that records Jesus Christ traveling with the Israelites, so the translation “accompanied” does not fit with the rest of Scripture. Christ was the hope of Israel, and people who looked forward to him were strengthened by their anticipation of their coming Messiah.

3. Since this verse mentions the Israelites in the desert, the desert wanderings become the “remoter context” against which one must check any interpretation. As we have already noted, there is no reference that can be brought forward to show that Christ was either with the Israelites or was somehow following them around. Are there verses that show that the Israelites were looking forward to the Messiah? Yes, many. The Passover Lamb foreshadowed the Messiah. The manna anticipated Christ being “the true bread from heaven.” The Tabernacle, with all its offerings, foreshadowed Christ in many ways, including being the place where people would meet God. The High Priest was a type of the Great High Priest, Jesus Christ. It was in the wilderness where that great prophecy of the coming Messiah was given: “A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel,” and “their kingdom will be exalted” (Num. 24:7 and 17). There is no question that the lesson from these verses is that the people looked forward to the coming of the Messiah and “drank,” *i.e.*, got strength and nourishment, from knowing that he was coming.

Buzzard, pp. 52 and 53  
Snedeker, pp. 440 and 441

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