

PARSHAT CHUKAT-BALAK
NUMBERS 19:1-25:9
HAFTARAH MICAH 5:6-6:8
9 TAMUZ 5786/24 JUNE 2026



Triptych from Rothko Chapel
Mark Rothko

FAITH: A WORK OF ART

1. “...speak to the rock *before their eyes* so that it gives forth its water. Thus you will bring forth for them water from the rock.” (Numbers 20:8)

“Because you did not trust (לֹא־הֵאֱמַנְתֶּם) Me enough to affirm My sanctity *before the eyes* of the Israelite people...” (Numbers 20:12)

2. אָמַן - confirm, support, nourish
אֱמוּנָה - firmness, steadfastness, fidelity
אֶמְנָה - river flowing through Damascus (2 Kings 5:12)
אֲמִן - master-worker, artist
3. “Every artist discovers that drawing – when it is an urgent activity – is a two-way process. To draw is not only to measure and put down, it is also to receive. When the intensity of looking reaches a certain degree, one becomes aware of an equally intense energy coming towards one, through the appearance of whatever it is one is scrutinizing....The encounter...is a ferocious and articulated dialogue. To sustain it requires faith.” (John Berger, *Keeping A Rendezvous*, emphasis added)
4. Paint not the thing but the effect that it produces. (Stephane Mallarme)

5. An experienced event is finite...a remembered event is infinite, because it is only a key to everything that happened before it and after it. (Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*)
6. ...all the people saw the sounds/voices. (Exodus 20:15)
7. Miriam died there....The community was without water. (Numbers 20:1, 2)

Moses struck the rock twice with his rod. (Numbers 20:11)

Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom...But Edom answered him...So Edom would not let Israel cross... (Numbers 20:14-21)

God said to Moses, "Assemble the people that I may give them water." The Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well – sing to it..." (Numbers 21:17-18)

Israel now sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites...Sihon would not let Israel pass...But Israel put them to the sword. (Numbers 21:21-24)