

A School in the Desert

Exodus 15-17

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Big-Picture Truth: When God tests us, He does so for our own good.

Three Distinct Times of Testing

- The test of bitter water at Marah (chapter 15)
- The test of hunger in the wilderness of Sin (chapter 16)
- And the test of thirst at Rephidim (chapter 17)

HOW DOES GOD TEST US? WHAT DOES A TEST OF FAITH LOOK LIKE?

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:6-7 (English Standard Version)

Answer: When God tests a believer, He does so by bringing a believer into situations or allowing for situations to develop in his or her life which call for trust, and that believer then has the opportunity to demonstrate endurance and obedience.

Testing God means putting God on probation.

. . . “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, . . .” Exodus 16:4 (ESV)

And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?” Exodus 17:7 (ESV)

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY EVIDENCE OF OUR FAITH DURING A TEST?

Answer: Obedience

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” Exodus 16:4-5 (ESV)

... “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.’ ” Exodus 16:23 (ESV)

There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, ²⁶saying, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer.” Exodus 15:25b-26 (ESV)

WHAT IS THE GREATEST DANGER DURING A TEST?

And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?” Exodus 17:7 (ESV)

Answer: That we think God has abandoned us.