

**God Will Lead You Through to:
“Christ the Rock”
Exodus 17:1 – 7**

Big Idea – God’s testing is always for my good.

Romans 8:28 “...we know that in all things God is working for our good and His glory.”

It is important to note the words “temptation” and “test, or trial”
The same Greek word translated “tempt” can also mean “test or trial.”

God never tempts us to do evil. (James 1:13)
God tests us for our learning, for our good. (James 1:2, 3; Genesis 22:1)

1 Corinthians 10:13 “There has no temptation overtaken you but what is common to man...”

1. God leads His people

Exodus 17:1 “Then the whole community of Israel left the wilderness of Sinai at the LORD’s command and moved from place to place.

How did God lead them? A pillar of cloud by day, at night a pillar of fire.

Does God lead we who are His people today? - Proverbs 3:5, 5 says if we trust God completely and don’t depend on our own understanding, He will direct our steps – He will lead, guide and direct us.

How? - Psalm 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.”

2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.”

2. God tested His people again

“Eventually they camped at Rephidim, but there was no water there for the people to drink.”

They were right where God wanted them to be. When? Then, right after he provided bread from heaven.

Again? Exodus 15:25b “There the LORD gave the people a rule and a law to live by, and there he tested their loyalty to him.

26 He said, “You must obey the LORD your God and do what he says is right.”

3. God’s people complained and failed the test again

Exodus 17:2 “So they quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.“ Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why are you testing the LORD?“

3 But the people were very thirsty for water, so they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Was it to kill us, our children, and our farm animals with thirst?“

God had to give them the same test all over again because they failed to learn the lesson God had for them.

James 1:2 “Dear brothers and sisters, when trials come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.

3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.”

Do you want to know when the trial, when the test will be over? When you’ve learned the lessons God wants you to learn. If you fail the test, He will give you another one, a make-up test until you pass!! 😊

4. Moses asked for God’s help

Exodus 17:4 “Moses cried out in prayer to GOD, “What can I do with these people? Any minute now they’ll kill me!“

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

Psalm 120:1 "In my distress I cried to the Lord and He heard me."

Psalm 57:1 "Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, until *these* calamities have passed by.

2 I cry out to God Most High, to the God who does everything for me.

3 He sends help from heaven and saves me. He punishes those who chase me. *Selah*+ God sends me his love and truth."

5. God gave Moses specific instructions

Exodus 17:5 "The LORD said to Moses, "Walk out in front of the people. Take your staff, the one you used when you struck the water of the Nile, and call some of the elders of Israel to join you.

6 I will stand before you on the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come gushing out. Then the people will be able to drink." So Moses struck the rock as he was told, and water gushed out as the elders looked on.

7 Moses named the place Massah (which means "test") and Meribah (which means "arguing") because the people of Israel argued with Moses and tested the LORD by saying, "Is the LORD here with us or not?"

The Lord instructed him to take some of the elders with him, plus the rod that symbolized God's power (Ex. 7:20), and to smite the rock in the sight of the people. When Moses obeyed, the water gushed forth from the rock and met the needs of the people and the livestock (Pss. 78:15-16; 105:41; 114:8; Isa. 48:21). A gracious God met the needs of a complaining people.

The rock is a type of Jesus Christ smitten for us on the cross

1 Corinthians 10:4 "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

and the water is a type of the Holy Spirit whose coming was made possible by Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven

John 7:37 "In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this He spoke of the Holy Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive..."

This explains why Moses was wrong to smite the rock when he should have spoken to it (Num. 20:1-13), because "[Christ] died to sin once for all" (Rom. 6:10, nkjv, and see Heb. 7:27; 9:26-28).

"Massah" means "to test," and "Meribah" means "contention, quarreling." The Jews had not yet learned that God tests His people in the everyday experiences of life. He uses the difficult experiences of life to strengthen our faith and mature our character.

Israel's faith in God was very weak, for they thought their God had led them to a place where He couldn't care for them! The trouble with the Israelites was that they had hard hearts that wouldn't submit to the Lord, so they rebelled against His will. In fact, the older generation had unbelieving hearts throughout their entire journey from Egypt to Canaan (Ps. 95:6-11; Heb. 3).

They complained about water at the beginning of their pilgrimage and also forty years later at the end (Num. 20:1-13).

Every difficulty God permits us to encounter will become either a test that can make us better or a temptation that can make us worse, and it's our own attitude that determines which it will be.

If in unbelief we start complaining and blaming God, then temptation will trap us and rob us of an opportunity to grow spiritually. But if we trust God and let Him have His way, the trial will work for us and not against us (Romans 8:28; James 1:12-15) and help us grow in grace.

When people are out of fellowship with the Lord, and are angry and bitter, they usually want to do unreasonable things that could only make the situation worse. In this instance, the people wanted to stone their leader!

(Ex. 17:5) How that would have changed their situation is difficult to discern, but disobedient people often look for a scapegoat.

On the map of our lives, how many places ought to be named "Testing and Quarreling" because of the way we've complained about our circumstances and failed to trust God?

It's one thing to sit comfortably in church and sing "All the way my Savior leads me, what have I to ask beside?" and quite something else to be confronted with distress and disappointment and meekly say, "Not my will but Thine be done."

Corrie ten Boom used to say, "Don't bother to give God instructions; just report for duty."