

Exodus 17:1-7, Water from the Rock

17 All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" ³ But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" ⁴ So Moses cried to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ And the Lord said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ 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?"

Questions

1. The wilderness records Israel's grumbling against the Lord. What is the difference between grumbling to God and the lamenting that we see in the Psalms?
2. Later in scripture it will look back on this moment as testing the Lord (Ps. 95) and a warning to not harden our hearts. What does it mean to test the Lord versus trusting him? As an example, think of how one may rationalize to challenge shelter-in-place is to trust the Lord but another would think it would be testing him as if God is obligated to protect us.
3. Ps. 81:7 says God tested Israel at the waters of Meribah. Why does God test us? Can you think of time God has tested you? Describe.
4. How can we move from grumbling to lamenting and from testing God to trusting him?