



## How God Responds When We're Unfaithful

Exodus 17:1-7

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<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> 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?"

<sup>3</sup> 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?" <sup>4</sup> So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."

<sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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?"

*This is the Word of the Lord*

### Community Group Questions:

1. How do you see God's patience at work in your life?
2. Can you see God's grace in your hardships?
3. See God putting himself in the place of judgement in this story, then reread 1 Corinthians 10 and connect the dots.

## I. The Patience of God

When Moses asks a question: "What shall I do with this people?" vs. 4  
God says; "We're going to go meet their need for water."

*Longsuffering means to take people who you should disdain, and people who you should reject, and you go serve them and meet their needs.*  
Tim Keller

**Everybody else's patience is up, but God's patience is not.**

### Do you know what the Exodus writer is trying to do for you here?

There's something wrong with our spiritual memories so good and true things fade from the memory incredibly fast, and bad and distorted things stay a hundred times longer.

## II. The Rock of God

verse 6-... strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.

**1<sup>st</sup> thing:** *If you're looking for a water in the desert the one place you would not go is to the top of a large rock.*

**2<sup>nd</sup> thing.** *God's grace tends to flow from the unlikeliest spots.*

**The metaphor:** *Until you get into a troubled spot, you will draw on water from other sources.*

*It's not until you get into a place where God is all you have that you realize all along, God was all you needed. You never know God is all you need until you get to a place where you find that God is all you have.*  
Tim Keller

"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." ... "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."  
John 4:10, 13,14

*The reason it's possible out of affliction to come happier people and out of temptation to come stronger people and out of failure to come humbler, wiser, and therefore, more effective people is because in the desert, you can find the water of God. Only in the desert can you find the water of God.*  
Tim Keller

## III. The Justice of God

"take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile"

"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.

God is saying , *You want a trial? We're going to have a trial.*  
But not a trial of Moses and not a trial for the people.  
**So who's on trial?**

"Behold, I will stand before you ..." *"to stand before" was language that expressed an inferior in the presence of a superior.*

Not only is God on trial, but finally he says: "Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb and you shall strike the rock ..." vs. 6

Edmund Clowney: Theologian: *"The astounding thing about Exodus 17 is that God, in his infinite mercy, goes beyond and gives us more than we have wrongfully asked when we say, "You should be blamed. Because God does come down, and he does take the blow of judgment. But not for this bad person or that bad person or even for himself. For us!"*

, I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. ...<sup>3</sup> All of them ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ.  
1 Corinthians 10:1,3,4

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me ... streams of living water will flow from within him."  
John 7:37,38