

EXODUS 17:1-7, ROLL CALL OF FAITH: MOSES

¹All 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. ²Therefore 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?” ³But 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?” ⁴So Moses cried to the LORD, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” ⁵And 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. ⁶Behold, 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. ⁷And he called the name of the place Massah^[a] and Meribah,^[b] because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

^[a] Massah means *testing*; ^[b] Meribah means *quarreling*

Discussion Questions

1. How (v. 2) were the people testing God? (See Psalm 95:7b–9.)
2. What (v. 7b) was the substance of the people’s testing of God?
3. What works of God had the people already witnessed? (See Exodus 15:19 and 16:13–15.)
4. Was placing the entire blame on Moses from the exodus from Egypt (v. 3) accurate? (See Exodus 2:23–24.)
5. How did the author of Hebrews (in 3:12) characterize the grumbling of the Children of Israel?
6. What (Hebrews 3:13–14) is required in order to avoid testing God in this way?
7. How was God testing his people? (See Exodus 23:20–22.)
8. What is the purpose of God’s testing? (See Exodus 20:20.)
9. How did the leader of the Israelites also eventually fail God’s test? (See Number 20:2–12.)
10. At the outset of his message, Pastor Jeff Brewer posed this question: “How do you walk by faith when you are facing the unknown?” On the basis of this study, what is your answer?