

Sermon Handout

“Testing and Protest”

Exodus 17:1-7

- I.** Quarreling with Moses, tempting the Lord vv. 1-3
 - A.** The people follow the Lord v. 1
 - B.** They quarrel with Moses, demanding water v. 2a
 - C.** Moses reproaches them v. 2b
 - Why do you quarrel with me?
 - Why would you tempt the Lord?
 - (*cf.* 16:7-8 - “. . . but against the Lord”)
 - D.** Again they murmur against Moses v. 3
 - Red Sea, Marah, Elim, now at Rephidim
 - Yet again, they accuse Moses of trying to kill them (*cf.* 16:3)
 - E.** They have forgotten their faith in the face of temptation
 - God had proven willing and able to provide for them

- II.** Moses appeals to God vv. 4-6
 - A.** He does what Israel should have done
 - B.** Israel had accused Moses: he wants “to kill us”
 - Now Moses fears they will kill him: “almost ready to stone me”
 - C.** The Lord’s response (no reproof, but patient instruction)
 - 1. Take the elders, take the rod
 - 2. Strike the rock and water shall be provided
 - Yet again, we see God’s patience with his people!

- III.** Moses assigns a dual name to the location v. 7
 - Massah = “testing” or “temptation”
 - They themselves were tempted
 - They tempted the Lord (*cf.* Mt 4:7)
 - Meribah = “protest” or “quarreling”
 - They quarreled with God

- IV.** The story points us to Jesus
 - A.** The Rock – I Cor 10:1-5 (*cf.* Numb 20:1-13)

 - B.** The danger of hard hearts – Ps 95 (esp. vv. 8-9)
 - (*See* Heb 3:8-9)

 - C.** The presence of enemies – Ps 23
 - (*cf.* Ex 17:8ff)
 - Why should we be afraid? Mt 28:20