

CHOSEN TO TRUST GOD'S PATH

Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) ²⁴ So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" ²⁵ Then Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became fit to drink...
Exodus 15:22-25 (NIV)

In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." ⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions..."
Exodus 16:2-4 (NIV)

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² So they quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses replied, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the Lord to the test?" ³ But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" ⁴ Then Moses cried out to the Lord, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ The Lord answered Moses, "Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink..."
Exodus 17:1-6 (NIV)

❖ Common Responses to Trials and Troubles

1. We tend to GRUMBLE and complain.

When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) ²⁴ So the people grumbled against Moses...
Exodus 15:23-24 (NIV)

In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt!"
Exodus 16:2-3 (NIV)

And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the Lord saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

Exodus 17:7 (NIV)

2. We will blame SOMETHING or SOMEONE else.

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for

the people to drink.² So they quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?”³ But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?”⁴ Then Moses cried out to the LORD, “What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me.” Exodus 17:1-4 (NIV)

3. We RE-LIVE and even GLORIFY the past.

In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.” Exodus 16:2-3 (NIV)

❖ How to Grow through God’s Refinement

1. Know that TRIALS do come.

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin... Exodus 17:1

“Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men and women. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks.” -Phillips Brooks

2. Rely on God’s faithfulness and PROVISION.

So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What are we to drink?”²⁵ Then Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became fit to drink. There the Lord issued a ruling and instruction for them and put them to the test.²⁶ He said, “If you listen carefully to the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you.” Exodus 15:24-26 (NIV)

(Jesus said,) “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith?³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Matthew 6:25-34 (NIV)

3. Choose to OBEY God’s instructions.

Moses said to them, “It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat.¹⁶ This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.’”¹⁷ The Israelites did as they were told;

some gathered much, some little.¹⁸ And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.¹⁹ Then Moses said to them, “No one is to keep any of it until morning.”²⁰ However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them. Exodus 16:15-20 (NIV)

*Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.*¹³ *When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;*¹⁴ *but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.*¹⁵ *Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

James 1:12-15 (NIV)

❖ **Benefits of Recognizing and Accepting God’s Discipline**

*In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.*⁵ *And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,”⁶ because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.”⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?⁸ If you are not disciplined – and everyone undergoes discipline – then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.⁹ Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!¹⁰ They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness.¹¹ *No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.**

Hebrews 12:4-11 (NIV)

1. Every detail of my life is under the AUTHORITY of God’s sovereignty.

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded.

Exodus 17:1 (NIV)

2. I learn to trust that God LOVES me no matter what.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

3. God’s training through discipline brings MATURITY and even JOY.

*Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord and delight in his salvation.*¹⁰ *My whole being will exclaim, “Who is like you, Lord? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them.”*

Psalms 35:9-10 (NIV)