

DOCTRINE OF TESTING

October, 2011

- I. Testing by God and testing by man is both good and necessary periodically: Lk.14:19: “Another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try/test [Gk. *dokimazo*] them out...’”; 1Sam. 17:39 “David fastened on his sword over his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, ‘I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them.’ And David took them off.”

- II. Classifications of Testing: Gen.22:1 "God tested Abraham"; Ex.15:25 "and there (bitter waters) He tested them."
 - A. Legitimate testing of man by man: 2Cor. 2:9 “For this end also I wrote you, so that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.”; 2Cor.8:22: “And we have sent with them our brother (Titus), whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things...” ;1Tim. 3:10 “They (deacons) must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”; Dan. 1:14 So he tested them in this matter (diet) and tested them for ten days.”; Rev. 2:21 “I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false.”

 - B. Sinful testing of man by man: Joseph’s testing of his brothers in Egypt (Gen. 42:15-16 “by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your younger brother comes here! Send one of you that he may get your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.”

 - C. Sinful testing of God by man: Acts 5:9 “Then Peter said to them, ‘Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out as *well*.’”; Acts 15:10 “Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear.”; Heb.3:9 “WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED/TESTED (Gk. *peirazo*) ME TRIED ME, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS.”; Ps. 95:9 “When your fathers tested Me, they tried Me, although they had seen My work.” (also Ex. 17:7; Deut. 6:16; Matt. 4:7 “Jesus said to him, ‘On the other hand, it is written, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’”; Mk. 8:11 “The Pharisees came out and began to argue with Him, seeking a sign from heaven, to test Him.”

 - D. Legitimate testing of God by man: Mal. 3:10 “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test/prove Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.”

E. Testing of man by God: Gen. 22:1 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham and said to him...(sacrifice of Isaac).”; Heb. 11:17 “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only/uniquely begotten son.”; Ps. 105:17-20 “He sent a man before them, Joseph *who* was sold as a slave. They afflicted his feet with fetters, he himself was laid in irons; until the time that his word came to pass; the word of Yahweh tested him. The king sent and released him, the ruler of peoples, and set him free.”; “Ex. 15:25b “There He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them.”; Eccl. 3:16-18 “Furthermore, I have seen under the sun that in the place of justice there is wickedness and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness; and said to myself, ‘God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man,’ for a time for every matter and for every deed is there. I said to myself concerning the sons of men, ‘God has surely tested them in order to see that they are but beasts.’”; Isa. 48:10 “Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver, I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.” Rev. 2:10 “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

III. The reasons for testing in Phase 2:

- A. To reveal what is in the heart: Gen. 22:12 “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that your fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”; Deut.8:2 “You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness, to humble you, test you, to know what *was* in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.”; 13:3 “you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for Yahweh your God is testing you to find out if you love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”; Ps. 7:9 “...For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds.”.
- B. To teach believers to trust God: Ex. 15:25 “Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; and he threw *it* into the waters, and the waters became sweet. There He made a statute and ordinance for them. And there He tested them.”
- C. To accelerate the endurance factor in spiritual growth: Jam.1:2-4 “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials/testings (both the noun *peirasmois*-test and the verb, *peirazo*-to test, is used here), knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. But let endurance have *its* perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing” (e.g. maturity adjustment.”
- D. To refine: Job 23:10 “But He know the way I take; He has tested Me, I shall come forth as gold.” Ps. 66:10 “For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined.”; Prov. 17:3 “The refining pot is for silver and the furnace is for gold, but the LORD tests the hearts.”; Zech. 13:9 “And I will bring the third part through the

- fire, Refine them as silver, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD My God.'"; 1Pet. 1:7 "so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."
- E. Surpassing grace blessing: Jam. 1:12 "Blessed is the man who perseveres under testing; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which has been promised to those who love Him."; Rev. 2:10 "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."
- IV. Testing must be distinguished from temptation: Jam.1:13: "Let no one say when he is tempted (vb. *peirazo*), 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone."
- A. God tests but does not tempt: Gen.22:1: "God tested Abraham"; Ex. 16:4 "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'I will rain down bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.'"
- B. Temptation is a solicitation to sin or evil: Jam. 1:14-15 "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished it brings forth death."
- C. Temptation for the believer comes from one of three sources:
1. The flesh: 1Pet. 2:11: "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."
 2. The world: Col. 2:20-23: "If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, 'Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch! (which all *refer to* things which perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and doctrines of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.'"; 1Jn. 2:16 "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world."
 3. The devil: Matt. 4:3 "And the tempter came and said to Him, 'If you are (1st class) the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.'"; 1Thess. 3:5 "For this reason, when I could endure *it* no longer, I also sent to find out your faith, for fear the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain."

- V. Testing can be classified as:
- A. Too much: water at Red Sea crossing site.
 - B. Wrong kind: bitter water at Marah.
 - C. None: water from the split-rock.
- VI. Three Examples of Testing and Divine Good: cf. Heb.10:32-36.
- A. Abraham: Jam. 2:21-24.
 - B. Rahab: Jam. 2:25-26.
 - C. Phinehas: Ps. 106:30-31.
- VII. Negligence under GAP is why tests are not passed:
- A. Stage 1: lack of consistency under face-to-face teaching; cf. Heb. 10:25.
 - B. Stage 2: failure to exercise faith in the content; cf. Jude 5 “Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things, that the Lord, after saving the people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.”
 - C. Stage 3: application: Jam. 2:20, 26 “faith without works is dead”.
- VIII. The Exodus Generation the classic example of testing God and failure: Ps. 78:41 “Again and again they tested God, and pained the Holy One of Israel.”
- A. They did this for forty years: Heb.3:9 "When your fathers tried Me by testing Me and saw My works for forty years."
 - B. Instead of trusting God, they tested God: Ps.78:18, 19 "And in their heart they tested God by demanding food according to their desire. And they spoke against God and they said, 'Can God prepare a table in the desert?'"
 - C. Testing of God was the upshot of their negative volition: Pss78:56 "Yet they tested and revolted against the Most High God and did not keep His testimonies."; 106:25 “But grumbled in their tents; they did not listen to the voice of Yahweh.”
 - D. They were critical of God and His servant Moses: Ps.106:25 "But complained in their tents and they did not listen to the voice of the Lord."; Ex. 16:7 “and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, for He hears your grumbings against the LORD; and what are we, that you should grumble/complain against us?"; Num. 17:5 “It will come about that the rod of the man whom I choose will sprout. Thus I will lessen upon Myself the grumbings of the sons of Israel, who are grumbling against you.”
 - E. Their punishment for maintaining this *modus operandi* was the sin unto death: Deut. 1:34-35 “Then the LORD heard the sound of your words, and He was angry and took an oath, saying, ‘Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers.’”; 2:14 “Now the time that it took us to come from Kadesh-barnea until we crossed over the brook Zered was thirty-eight years, until all that generation of the men of war perished from within the camp, as Yahweh had sworn to them.”; Num. 32:13 “So the LORD’S anger burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the entire generation of those that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone.”; 1Cor. 10:5 “Nevertheless,

with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness (cf. vv. 6-11).

- F. The Exodus Generation Tested God on Ten Occasions: Num. 14:22 “Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs which I have performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice,”
1. Panic at the Red Sea Crossing Site: Ex. 14:11-12.
 2. Complaining over bitter water at Marah: Ex. 15:24.
 3. Complaining over no food in the wilderness of Sin: Ex. 16:3.
 4. Failure to follow instructions in the collection of manna: Ex. 16:20.
 5. Attempting to collect manna on the Sabbath: Ex. 16:28-29.
 6. Complaining over no water at Rephidim: Ex. 17:2-3.
 7. Failing to faith-rest Moses’ absence resulting in idolatry and immorality at Sinai: Ex. 32:7-10.
 8. Complaining about hardships at Taberah: Num. 11:1-4.
 9. Complaining about manna and lusting for different food: Num. 11:4ff.
 10. The evil majority report regarding the conquest of Canaan: Num. 14:1-4.
- G. Only two men out of that generation survived due to their faith: Num. 26:65; 32:12; Duet. 1:35-38
- H. Instead their children (conquest generation) enjoyed the Ph2 blessing of entering the Promised Land: Deut. 1:39 “Moreover, your little ones who you said would become a prey, and your sons, who this day have no knowledge of good or evil shall enter there; to them I will give it to possess it.” cp. Ps. 106:24 “Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe His word.”
- I. The divine assessment of that generation is: “For forty years I loathed that generation, and said they are a people who err in their heart, and they do not know My ways.”; and Deut. 1:35 “Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers.”; Ps. 78:8 “And not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that did not prepare its heart, and whose spirit was not faithful to God.”
- J. God will not test the believer beyond what can be handled: 1Cor. 10:11-13 “Now all these things happened to them (Ex. Gen.) as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. No testing has overtaken you but such as is common to man (CHPs); and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested/tempted beyond what you are able, but with the testing will provide the way of escape, so that you will be able to endure it.”

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