

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...").
- II. Of man by God (Gen.22:1 "God tested Abraham"; Ex.15:25 "and there (bitter waters) He tested them."
 - A. Of man by man (academics, athletics; 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.").
 - B. Of God by man (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." [evil testing]; Mal. 3:10 "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test 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." [Bona-fide testing]).
- III. The reasons for testing in Phase 2:
 - A. To reveal what is in the believer's heart (Gen. 22: "Do not stretch out your hand against the young man, 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."; 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 sliver 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 sliver, 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 sin nature: (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.").

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. There is no test or temptation too great for God's grace (1Cor. 10:13 "No temptation/testing has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested/tempted beyond what you are able, but with the testing/temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.").

A. Therefore you will not face a test uncommon to man (CHPs).

B. God will not allow you to be tested beyond your ability to handle it.

C. God will provide both the deliverance and the doctrine to handle the test.

VII. Testing and divine good (Heb.10:32-36).

A. Abraham (Gen.22:1-14; Jam. 2:21; Heb. 6:12-15).

B. Rahab (Jam. 2:25).

VIII. Breakdowns of the grace apparatus for perception (GAP) is the reason tests are not passed.

A. Stage 1 (assembly; Heb. 10:25).

B. Stage 2 (GAP;).

C. Stage 3 (application or good production; Jam. 2:20, 26 "faith without works is dead").

IX. God is also said to be tested.

A. Absolute sovereignty cannot be tested; therefore this is an anthropopathism (Ps.78:41: "Again and again they tested God, and pained the Holy One of Israel").

B. The Exodus Generation tested God to provide living grace (Heb.3:9 "When your fathers tried Me by testing Me and saw My works for forty years.").

C. But 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?").

D. Testing of God is related to their negative volition (Ps.78:56 "Yet they tested and revolted against the Most High God and did not keep His testimonies.").

E. 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 grumblings 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 lesson upon Myself the grumblings of the sons of Israel, who are grumbling against you.").

F. 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."; 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. 10:5-11 "Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we should not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things

happened to them as an example (negative), and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."