

# A Warning about Whining

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. And now we come to the section of Exodus, kind of known as the wilderness wanderings.

It's where God intentionally, listen, He intentionally takes His people into the wilderness. This is by God's plan.

We talked about even several weeks ago that He's taking them the long way. And we talked about how sometimes we think the long way is the wrong way, but that's not the case here at all.

[ 1 : 5 7 ]     God is purposely taking His people into the wilderness. Now, I told you last week, when you think wilderness, don't think like trees and forest and something lush like that.

That is not the wilderness we're talking about. Wilderness here means desert. That means God is intentionally taking His people into a place of trial and thirst and hunger and having no idea where they're going and feeling directionless.

Does anybody tonight relate to that? Because I've got good news for you. Listen, whether you like it or not, at some point in life, you're going to be in the wilderness. You're going to be a desert place.

A season where you are hungry and not satisfied and wondering, God, what in the world are you doing? Amen?

And that is exactly what God is doing with His people here in Exodus, which means I say all that to say there is so much that we can learn from Israel here in Exodus about our own time when we're in the wilderness of life.

[ 3 : 1 0 ]     Let's pick up where we left off last week here in chapter 17 and beginning at verse 1. If you are able to stand, would you please do so as we honor the reading of God's Word.

Exodus 17 and verse 1 says that all the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, encamped near Raphadim.

But there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore, 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? But the people thirsted there for water and they 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?

And Moses cried out to the Lord, what shall I do with this people? They're almost ready to stone me. And the Lord said to Moses, pass on before the people taking with you some of the elders of Israel, take in your hand the staff, the one which you used to strike the Nile and go.

- [ 4 : 21 ] Behold, I will stand before you and there on the rock of Oreb, you will 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. And he called the name of the place Massa and Meribah because of the quarreling of the people of Israel because they tested the Lord by saying, is Yahweh among us or not?
- Let's pray. Lord, thank you for this time together tonight and this time now in your word. And I am very aware of what is about to be said.
- And I pray that you would use it to speak into our hearts or that we would pay attention tonight. That whatever distractions might be going on around us or within us, that we would focus by your grace upon your word.
- And I pray this in Jesus' name and God's people said, Amen. You can be seated. She was beautiful, talented, and by her late 20s, a promising singer and musician.
- [ 5 : 35 ] Eva Cassidy seemed to have the world by her fingertips. She was the third of four children. She lived in Washington, D.C. She worked at a nursery watering plants and caring for the greenhouse.
- But music, oh man, music was her life. And like many startup musicians, her music barely brought in enough money to pay her rent.
- Her breakout music video was made on a handheld camera. And her first album was self-financed. She played mostly small venues throughout her career until eventually her career did break out.
- She ended up selling over 10 million records and becoming a household name for her renditions of Fields of Gold and Over the Rainbow.
- Then one day, while Eva was traveling, she met a dermatologist. He noticed a mole on her shoulder and encouraged her that she really should have someone look at that.
- [ 6 : 49 ] When she returned home, she had a biopsy done and the results were positive for melanoma. The good news was the cancer was not very deep and she had a very bright future ahead of her.
- They performed surgery on her and they were convinced they had removed all of the cancer. Reassured by the apparent success of her operation, Eva refused to follow up with any of the appointments months after.
- Her doctor wanted to do regular checkups, but Eva didn't think they were necessary. After all, she was fine. After all, it had all been removed.
- And then months later, when she was scheduled to have a hip replacement, an x-ray found that the cancer had not been fully removed as they originally thought and had spread to her lungs.
- Given the advanced progression, there was nothing they could do. And on September the 16th, 1996, Eva Cassidy gave her final performance in Washington, D.C.
- [ 8 : 05 ] This was her final song. I see trees that I breathe. And red roses too.
- I watched them bloom. For me and you. And I have been groomed to myself.
- Oh, what a wonderful world. I hear babies cry.
- I watch them grow. They'll learn much more. And I'll ever know.
- And I think to myself. Oh, what a wonderful world.
- [ 9 : 17 ] She passed three weeks later. They interviewed her dad about his daughter's death.
- And here's what Eva's father, Hugh, said. Quote, I think people nowadays wouldn't miss follow-up appointments. If you do, you do it to your own peril.

You simply can't ignore the warnings. Faith family, why do we ignore warnings?

You know what I'm talking about. The signs in life that tell you, hey, there's something wrong. There's danger ahead. There's something here that needs your attention.

And people do it all the time, do they not? People will ignore warnings about severe weather. And they'll remain in a dangerous situation. People ignore the warnings on a vehicle.

[ 10 : 25 ] And they end up stranded. They ignore the relationship warnings. And end up drifting further apart. They ignore the warnings of stress and anxiety and worry.

And they're busy. And they end up crashing. They ignore the warning signs of addiction. And they end up enslaved. I bet all of us at one point in life have ignored a warning.

But faith family, what I want you to understand tonight is that warnings do not just come to us physically. Amen? There are actually warning signs, not just of physical problems, but of spiritual ones.

There are signs in our life that point us to deep spiritual problems that need our attention.

Amen? And that's what Exodus 17 is about. Here in Exodus chapter 17, we have a spiritual warning. I realize on the surface of it, it may not seem that way.

[ 11 : 27 ] But if you actually understand Exodus 17 in light of the whole counsel of God's Word and how it is used elsewhere in Scripture, you would realize that Exodus chapter 17 is frequently used in the New Testament as a warning.

This example right here that we just read is frequently used to get Christians' attention to say, hey, you need to wake up.

In fact, Paul uses it in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 when he says this, 1 Corinthians 10, 6. Now these things, referring to this Exodus event, took place as examples for us so that we might not desire the evil as they did.

The writer of Hebrews, if you know the book of Hebrews, will actually use this event in Exodus 17 three different times in the letter to the Hebrews. Here's one example in chapter 3, verse 15.

As it is said today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion. For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses, with whom he was provoked for 40 years?

[ 12 : 43 ] Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? In other words, the New Testament treats Exodus 17 as a warning.

There's something going on here that if you see it in your life, needs for you to get your attention and take serious attention to your heart.

So what's going on here in Exodus chapter 17? Look again in verse 1. All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, and they camped at Raphadim.

But there was no water for the people to drink. And therefore 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? But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, Why did you bring us up from Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?

[ 13 : 47 ] If you read this, you'll notice there's a sense of deja vu, right? Like we've seen this before. As I read those verses, you're like, Wait a minute.

Is this like a movie that's caught on rerun? Because last week we were here, or we listened online, and it seems like the exact same thing, right?

They were thirsty for water, and they were hungry for food, and once again they're grumbling about it. In fact, this is the third in a series of grumbling stories.

And in Exodus 17, it's the exact same problem that they had in chapter 15 and chapter 16. They're in the desert, and there's no water. Now, you would think after what we looked at last week, right?

In chapter 15, they're thirsty, they can't drink water, and God provides them sweet water. In fact, do you remember the springs of water and the palm trees, the five-star resort that God took them to, right?

[ 14 : 50 ] So you'd think in light of that that they would trust God, right? But they don't. They grumble again. Now, let me say like what I said last week, the last thing I would do is downplay the importance of water in the desert, amen?

Like water is essential for life. And the same with many of the situations and issues that you go through. Notice it on the screen. I'm not minimizing our suffering. I'm simply maximizing God's sovereignty.

No one here is saying, oh, water in the desert, suck it up. That's a big deal. That's a big problem. What we're saying is, haven't you seen that God has time and time again provided for you?

That in your suffering, he is sovereign and he always makes a way. And notice, not only do they thirst again, they take it out on Moses again.

Verse three, the people thirsted there for water and they 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?

[ 15 : 56 ] And so once again, they're like, Moses, why did you bring us into the desert to kill us? Now, at this point, Moses turns to God. Look at what he says. He says, what shall I do with this people?

Right? Moses has had enough. Moses is like, I'm done. I'm out. What am I going to do with these people? All they ever do is whine and complain.

Any parents out here ever felt that way with your kids? Right? What am I going to do with these kids? They won't stop. They won't stop begging. They won't stop arguing. What am I going to do?

Listen, if you have been in pastoral ministry for three seconds, you have said what Moses just said. What am I going to do with these people? Right? And so I think Moses should be given some credit here for how well he deals with these grumbling people.

Because if it were me, this is how I think I would handle it. I think I'd take him up on the high rope and maybe slam him down. Right? That would be my response to these people.

[ 17 : 01 ] But that is not Moses' response at all. He, listen, he, unlike the people of Israel, takes it before the Lord. Are you with me? Israel just whines and complains.

Moses brings this issue before the Lord. Now, last week I gave specific reasons why we grumble. We're not going to go back through them. But this passage, and the reason why I'm stopping after seven verses, is this passage actually takes this issue a step further.

And we see, listen, what the warning sign of grumbling and complaining in life is actually pointing us to. In fact, we'll also see why Paul calls their grumbling in 1 Corinthians 10 evil.

Don't have the evil desire that they had. What is the evil thing going on here? The Hebrews calls this, don't be like your fathers in the days of the rebellion.

What is it that was such a rebellion? And when we discover that, we will see a spiritual warning about the condition of our hearts.

[ 18 : 15 ] So let me take you through this text and show you what's going on. You ready? Verse 15, chapter 15, verse 22. Now, Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went to the wilderness of Sur.

And they, three days in the wilderness, they what? Say it. Found no water. Okay? We've heard that before. They came to Marah, but they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter.

Therefore, it was named Marah. And the people did what? They grumbled against Moses saying, What shall we drink? Now, he cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a log and threw it in the water, and the water became sweet.

There the Lord made for them a statue and a rule. And there, come on, I need everybody to say this loud. He tested them.

Hold that up there for a minute. Go back. He tested them. So who's testing who? God is testing Israel. Now look at chapter 16 and verse 4.

[ 19 : 18 ] Then the Lord said to Moses, this was all last week. Behold, I'm about to rain bread from heaven. So now we're not dealing with the, we don't have any water, we're thirsty. Now we're dealing with we need food.

And God says, listen, I'm going to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day that, everybody say it with me, I may test them.

Now who's testing who? God is testing Israel. Is everybody with me? Say yes. God uses the first example of water, chapter 15.

The second example of food, chapter 16, as a test for Israel. Two trials, two tests, and what is God testing Israel about?

To see if whether or not they will trust him. Will you trust me? Will you do as I have commanded? Will you follow my ways?

[ 20 : 19 ] You see, I've said this before. Faith is only faith if it's used. That's a good place for an amen, but that's all right. What good does it do to have faith if you don't ever have to use it?

How do you know if your faith is actually genuine? You're taken through wildernesses where you have to use it. And you have to trust that God will provide.

And do not think that this is just some kind of Old Testament thing. The Apostle Peter speaks of this as well. Look at 1 Peter chapter 1 and verse 6. In this, that is your inheritance, though now for a little while, if necessary, you've been grieved by various, say it, trials.

So that the, come on, tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may result in the praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

So here it is. Everybody right here. There are times that God takes us through the wilderness. And he takes us through trials. And he takes us through those trials to test if our faith is genuine.

[ 21 : 39 ] Because what good is faith if you never have to use it? And so Yahweh is testing Israel. Everybody's got that, right? If you don't have that, you fell asleep, so wake up, all right?

If you've zoned out, what do you do? Zone back in. God is testing Israel. Now watch. Watch.

What ends up happening. Now we're in chapter 17, verse 2. Therefore 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, come on, test the Lord? Now who's testing who? Keep reading.

Chapter 17, verse 7. And he called the name of the place Massa and Meribah because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, because they, here it is, say it, tested the Lord by saying, is the Lord among us or not.

[ 22 : 39 ] Please tell me you see what's happened. Please, I'm trying to go slow enough that we all see it in the text. Notice it on the screen. Oh man, rather than the wilderness being a place where Israel experiences a trial, it has become a place where Israel has put God on trial.

Oh, somebody say, preach, preacher. Rather than the wilderness as it was intended to be, to be a place where God tests the faith of His people, it becomes a place where His people test the faithfulness of God.

In other words, what's happening here is this is not a place where Israel is now on trial. God is now on trial. In fact, if you don't think that's what's happening, I think it's pretty obvious in the text, then note that word quarreling.

Did you notice that word that was in the text several times? That word quarreling, like in the English, it's hard to understand because in the English, it's like fighting and arguing.

And there's a sense in which that's true. But the Hebrew word here for quarrel actually means this, quote, to bring a charge. It's a legal proceeding, which by the way, are you listening, is why Moses thinks they're going to stone him.

[ 23 : 58 ] Because that's what you do in a legal trial in the ancient Near East. Somebody's found guilty, they are stoned. And so there's a trial going on here, but it's not a trial for Israel, at least in Israel's mind.

It's a trial for God. The question is, notice it on the screen, not will Israel trust God, it's is God trustworthy? I mean, is He among us or not?

What? That's the question we demand answered. God, have you abandoned us or are you still with us?

And so are you still with me? Listen, what is the evil? Listen, what is the evil? What is the rebellion that is taking place underneath the grumbling?

It is a heart of unbelief that makes God live up to your expectations. This is evil.

[ 25 : 03 ] This is deep rebellion. Namely, a heart of unbelief that puts God on trial rather than you being on trial.

And my dear friends, we do this all the time. I'll just give you a few examples. Well, God can't be good given all the suffering in the world.

Well, God can't be loving if He predestines things. God can't be sovereign if He allowed this to happen.

Well, God can't be present if I'm in the wilderness without water. And in all of those situations and 15 more I could give, the real issue is instead of God testing your faith, you have decided to test God.

To which I ask, who do you and I think we are? Who do you think you are? To put God on trial?

[ 26 : 13 ] He's creator. You're created. He's the potter. You're the clay. He is perfect. You are sinful. The only rational reason we would do such a thing is we think we are God.

God. Because I get to determine whether God is good or not. I get to determine whether or not God is loving. I get to determine who God is based on what He does in my life.

Not based on how He has revealed Himself to be. Oh, this is heavy, but it's good. Amen? Amen? I hope you're as convicted as I was in studying this.

You need to be very careful of the heart that says, God won't be the judge of me. I'll be the judge of God. And you say, okay, okay. But practically, how does this evil of unbelief surface?

You've talked about these warning signs. What warning signs should I look for that might point me to this kind of heart? You ready?

[ 27 : 25 ] Grumbling. Complaining. It's all in the text. Notice it on the screen. Grumbling is the warning sign of unbelief in your heart because grumbling reveals a lack of trust in both God's care and His ability to provide for you.

And that is why Paul calls this evil and the Hebrews writer calls it rebellion. And let me tell you why it would do very well for us tonight to listen up.

Listen up. Listen. Some of you have ignored spiritual checkups for a long time. Some of you have ignored spiritual checkups. You keep thinking, I'm fine.

I'm good. I'm educated. I'm busy. I've got other things to do. I don't need to make these things a priority.

But here's what's going on. Are you listening? Please tell me you're listening. Because of your refusal to do spiritual checkups, the cancer of unbelief keeps growing in your heart.

[ 28 : 37 ] Because you haven't stopped to do the necessary focus and care about your spiritual heart. And you just keep ignoring the warning signs.

Some of which is grumbling and complaining about the wilderness you're in. You're actually letting the cancer of unbelief keep growing. And if it goes unchecked, I hope you're listening.

If it goes unchecked, here's the kind of person. Here's the kind of people that it creates. That over a six month period of time, you can witness ten plagues while being saved from all of them.

You can have a pillar of fire guide you at night and a cloud guide you by day. You can pass through the safety of the Red Sea on dry land and watch the Egyptians drowned.

You can be taken to places of spiritual springs of water and palm trees. Here's what can happen. Here's what can happen. You can daily receive manna from heaven.

[ 29 : 45 ] Every day. You can have manna come to you from heaven. And you can have quail come to you. You can have all of that happen and more in a six month period of time.

And still have the spiritual arrogance and audacity to ask, are you with me or not? That's where the cancer of unbelief will take you.

The first thing that you can do is that you can see all the signs of the providence of God and remain dead to it.

And then the very next moment you get thirsty again, God gets put back on trial. This is an evil and a rebellion that needs to be addressed in our heart.

It is why the psalmist in Psalm 95 will take this, that is Exodus 17, and he'll quote it. And then in Hebrews, Psalm 95 is quoted three times. Notice it here.

[ 30 : 48 ] Today, if you hear his voice, don't harden your hearts as in Meribah, as on the day of Massa in the wilderness. In other words, here's what the psalmist is saying.

It's what I'm saying to all of us tonight. Please don't go another day with a hardened heart. Please don't go another day with God on trial in your life because you are only allowing the cancer of unbelief to keep going.

And the fear is that by the time it actually gets discovered, it's too late. You're dead. You're gone. You want nothing to do with God.

That's a scary place to be. Amen? So, faith family, don't harden your heart today. If you hear his voice, don't harden your heart like these people.

Let these people be an example for you. Let this be a warning sign to you. Look to the grumbling and complaining in your life and the things that you're just not happy about that's not going on in your wilderness.

[ 31 : 55 ] Don't let that be a means in which you let your heart put God on trial. Instead, what you should do is test that your faith is genuine and trust him to provide once again.

So, we see here the grumbling heart gets revealed and what's behind it. It's a heart of unbelief that has grown in the nation of Israel. Now, how does God respond to this rebellion?

How does God respond to this evil? And at this point, I want to say enough is enough. I'm kind of like Moses. It's time to move on. It's time to get going. What lies ahead? I have no way of knowing Tom Petty.

Anyways, that's what I would do. But remember, this is not just how God should respond to Israel. This is how God should respond to us. Because I don't know about you, but I'm pretty well exposed here in these first few verses because my heart can be the exact same way that the people of Israel is.

There are times in which, God, are you sure you're good? God, are you sure you love me? God, are you sure? Are you sure? Are you sure? Stop it. Look at everything I've done for you.

[ 33 : 06 ] Look at all the ways I've provided. Trust me. Walk by faith. And so, I know this is me. Is this not you? In fact, if anything, I thought about this, how Exodus is a lot like walking into a room and you see a portrait on the wall and you look at the portrait on the wall and you go, Oh, what an ugly person.

And then you realize, It's a mirror. I'm the ugly person. That's my reflection. That's how I feel as I study Israel. It's like, you're so ugly and rebellious.

Oh, that's me. I look that way. I respond that way. I deal with those struggles. So the question is not just how should God respond to them?

It is how should God respond to us? And here's his response. Verse 5. The Lord said to Moses, Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and taking your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.

Behold, I will stand before you on the rock of Oreb. You shall strike the rock, and the water shall come out of it. And the people, you know those evil, grumbling, rebellious people?

[ 34 : 25 ] They will drink. Just stop for a moment and marvel with me at God's compassion for his undeserving people.

Are you with me? Like, if this is a rerun, if this is a movie that we've watched before, the grace of God should be the part of the movie we never get tired of seeing. This is the response that should leave us literally just shaking our heads in amazement.

How can God do this? Why would God do this? It just, it surpasses all understanding. Amen? Again, marvel with me tonight, first of all, that God provides.

Marvel that God provides. What I mean here is that God gives them water. Again! He just did it in Exodus 15. He's doing it again in Exodus 17. And this reveals something about the character of God.

Can I throw a word at you that you maybe not have heard in a long time? It's a Bible word, even an old English word, that we don't really use a lot. We tend to use the word patience or tolerance or things like that.

[ 35 : 37 ] But when is the last time you heard the word long-suffering? Long-suffering. This is the picture here of the long-suffering character of God.

You say, what does it mean to long-suffer? It isn't just patience. It isn't just tolerance. God is not just putting up with His people. Notice this on the screen.

Long-suffering is the willingness this is my definition based on Exodus 17. It's the willingness to continue to meet the needs of an undeserving person for a long period of time. It's the willingness.

The willingness. You're gladly. You're willing. You're not forced to do it. You don't have to do it. You just willingly continue to meet the needs of an undeserving person over and over and over and over and over again.

In other words, you suffer long. It's more than patience. It's more than tolerance. It is a true endurance and perseverance and love for a people that don't deserve it at all.

[ 36 : 50 ] Amen? But don't just marvel that God provides. Marvel how God provides. Maybe this is just me.

But it sticks out to me how God provides the water. It's the weirdest way possible. One commentator writes, quote, God didn't merely allow the Israelites to find water.

He showed them His provision by supplying that water in a place it was not otherwise available that is a rock. Like, has this not been a theme throughout the wilderness?

That is, I don't know if you know this. Okay? I'm glad you're sitting down. And listen, I went to seminary so I know smarter things like this. Okay? So let me just give you some biblical wisdom.

Food doesn't normally come down from heaven. Okay? Bread doesn't typically come from heaven. It comes from Panera. We all know it comes from Panera.

[ 37 : 47 ] That's where you get food or byerlies. The normal way isn't, I'm just gonna, I'm just gonna rain down bread and quail from the sky. That's not the normal way.

And I don't know if you know this as well. You don't normally get water from a rock. You get the point? I hope so. I'm using a little bit of sarcasm to drag it out.

In other words, God is not only showing His provision, He's showing His power. Can I just say, and some of you can testify to this. I know I can in my life. But notice this. Listen, when you're in the wilderness of life, God will provide for you in ways you could have never imagined.

I mean, you could have never imagined. Of all the places I thought I would have gotten water, it wouldn't have been from a rock. And that is exactly what God does.

Oh, I won't go into details or anything because it's not necessary, but there has been a time in my life a few years ago when there was a place, you know, you thought you'd get water from.

[ 38 : 50 ] And there was one specific, Neil may even remember this, he was with me, but we were in downtown Minneapolis and there was a group of Pentecostal pastors. I'm not even Pentecostal.

A group of Pentecostal pastors gathered around over me, prayed for me, encouraged me, and said, keep pressing on. And listen, listen, that was a rock I never expected to get water from.

There were places I thought I'd get water from, dry. And then there are those places of just rocks and you think nothing could come from that and God just pours out water.

Listen, you're in the wilderness right now, cheer up. God is going to provide for you in ways you can't possibly imagine. You look around and you're like, all I see is rocks? There ain't no chance I'm ever going to get water.

Watch Him. Just watch Him. Do what only He can do as He has the power to provide. Well, how do we bring all this together?

[ 39 : 58 ] How do we bring all this together? By asking this question, it would be this. How do we heed the warning of an unbelieving heart, Israel, and they're grumbling and complaining because they've put God on trial.

How do we avoid that, heed the example, but also see the goodness of God as He's pouring out water from a rock? And the answer would be look at the water that God has provided for you.

In other words, if you want to avoid this kind of unbelieving heart that grumbles and complains and is hardened towards God and is always asking and questioning His goodness and care and all of that, and at the same time you want to see just how amazing His goodness is, then look to the water He's provided for you.

And some of you would say, well, pastor, I've never experienced anything like this. I have never in my life been given water from a rock. Yes, you have. Oh, yes, you have.

If you are a Christian, you have most certainly been given water from a rock. You see, the rock of Exodus 17 is more than stone.

[ 41 : 09 ] it's a person. You say, you know. You pull Jesus out of the hat in the Old Testament a lot.

A rock? Come on now. It's a bit much that you think this is pointing to Jesus. Oh, I don't think it's pointing to Jesus. Paul does.

1 Corinthians 10 verse 1. I do not want you to be unaware that our fathers were all under the cloud. Exodus. All passed through the sea.

Exodus. All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. All ate the same spiritual food. All drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them.

Come on, say it with me. The rock was Christ. See, I ain't making this stuff up. The rock was Christ. Now, follow me on this because I get that you probably would ask, like, well, how in the world does a rock on the side of a mountain in Exodus 17 point to Jesus?

[ 42 : 19 ] I mean, talk about stretching things. Paul must be worse than Pastor Wes. You're just trying to find Jesus everywhere. No, no. Stop, stop, stop. In the Old Testament, who is the rock?

Not Dwayne Johnson. Not that rock, okay? Different rock. In the Old Testament, in the Old Testament, who's the rock? Psalm 18, verse 2. The Lord is my rock and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalm 62, verse 1. For God alone, my soul waits in silence. From him comes my salvation. He alone is my and my salvation. In other words, in the Old Testament, who is frequently seen as a rock?

God is. But that's not all. Listen, listen. What was Moses told to do to the rock? He was told to strike the rock. In other words, rather than God striking his people for their sin, Moses is told to strike the rock.

Hmm. Okay. What is he told to strike the rock with? His staff. The rod. And the text says, you can go back and read it, it's specifically the staff with which you struck the Nile.

[ 43 : 47 ] In other words, it's the rod of judgment. judgment. So, what's the result of then striking the rock with the rod of judgment?

Answer, living water comes pouring out. Water that saved Israel in the wilderness. So, put it all together. Stop me if you've heard this one before.

Here it is. God provides salvation to disobedient people, not by striking them with judgment, but by taking their judgment upon himself.

And if you've been around faith family for ten seconds, you know what that means. It is a revealing of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, the rock became flesh.

He took on flesh. And do you know what happened to the rock? The rock was struck. And do you know what the rock was struck with? The judgment of God as He hung upon the cross.

[ 44 : 51 ] And do you know what poured out as a result? Let me let Him tell you. John 4, verse 13. Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

The water that I give him will become in him a spring of water welding up to what? Eternal life.

Do you want to see the goodness of God? And do you want to see what will protect your heart from putting God on trial, wondering if He's good?

See the water that He's given you. See the rock, Jesus Christ. As Israel received saving water from this rock in Exodus 17, you, if you're a Christian, have received saving water from the rock of Jesus Christ.

So you avoid the danger of an unbelieving heart by looking to the water that God has provided you. By looking to the water that God has provided you.

[ 46 : 08 ] Right here. I'm done. I'm almost done. Here it is. When doubt begins to creep up about whether or not He exists, just look to the rock.

When you don't believe God actually cares for you in the wilderness, look to the rock. When you wonder why He could be good and allow so much suffering to happen, look to the rock.

When you don't think God is actually with you, look to the rock. and it will remind you of all God has done for you and you will see the goodness of God.

Stories like Eva's break my heart. They're really sad and devastating. And it's not just because of the awfulness of death and cancer, though that is true.

It's the sad reminder of what happens when we think we're okay. I don't need a spiritual checkup. I don't need to take the warning signs in my life seriously.

[ 47 : 21 ] I mean, after all, it's just a little grumbling. It's just a little complaining. And all the while, the cancer of unbelief keeps growing in your heart.

Tonight, Faith Family, would you take care of yourself spiritually? Would you let the symptoms of grumbling cause you tonight? Are you listening? Go see a doctor.

And if you will, I just happen to know a great physician. And all God's people said, Amen. Let's pray.

Lord, thank you. Sincerely thank you for examples like this in Exodus 17, which are intended to wake us up, to recognize the things that we're quick to dismiss.

It's just grumbling. It's just complaining. It's just this. No, no, no, no, no. That's a sign of something deeper. There may very well be a heart of unbelief that's not trusting in you that has put you on trial as though you have to defend yourself.

[ 48 : 39 ] No, what this is to be a time is for us to be on trial and trust you and walk by faith in the wilderness. And as hard as it may be at times to wonder where in the world we will ever get water, you always provide.

From places we thought were impossible and certainly never could have imagined. That's the caring father that you are. And nothing proves that more than the fact that you sent your son to live a life we couldn't live, to die a death that we deserved, to be risen from the grave and to be now seated at the right hand of you, O Father, interceding as our high priest.

What more proof do we need that you are with us? we really shouldn't have to ever ask the question, is the Lord among us or not?

You have already given us that guarantee. And that is now what we turn our minds to as we enter into a time of remembrance and communion. As our minds focus on the cross and we think about how you have made the ultimate provision that the rod of judgment was placed on Christ and from him came living water.

A spring of water welling up to eternal life. Oh, may that captivate our minds in these next few moments. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.