

God Provides Water

Exodus 17:1-7

As we begin today's session, we find the Israelites continuing their journey toward the Promised Land. They were still getting manna every morning and quail every evening, but they could not find water at their latest campsite. Again, instead of calling in faith upon the God who had secured their freedom, turned bitter water sweet, and provided manna and quail, the people complained to Moses. Again, instead of trusting God, they lamented that they were going to die in the desert for lack of water. As you can see from Exodus 17:4, Moses was exasperated. God, however, proves his patience and love in this passage, giving the Hebrews the water they needed in spite of their complaining and their lack of faith.

God had a plan. His instructions to Moses must have seemed ludicrous! Moses was to take with him the leaders of the people—likely representatives from each tribe—so that they could see firsthand what God was going to do. In front of these leaders, Moses was to hit with his staff a rock that God would point out to him. And enough water would come out of the rock to take care of the needs of two million people. As unlikely as God's plan seemed, Moses didn't question God. He did what God told him to do, and God did what he said he would do. Moses and God gave a convincing demonstration of what acting on faith in God can do. What a story those leaders must have had to take back and tell their people!

The names Moses gave to the place where all this happened mean "testing" and "quarreling." No doubt Moses' intent was to make this place a reminder of the people's unbelief, but also an encouragement toward faith in the God who had provided for them.

Devotion for Leaders

The One Thing: A relationship with Jesus brings us forgiveness, not perfection. As our faith in Jesus grows, we become more like him! Thank you, Jesus, for being patient with us and molding us to be like you.

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Think of some people who bring you frustration. Why are they frustrating to you? Now think of some people you have recently frustrated. Why did you create frustration for them? What must happen for you to see resolution in these situations? Pray for clarity and the opportunity to recognize when you need to extend to these people the same type of grace and understanding that Jesus has given you.