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When Do We Test God?

*Jesus answered him, "It is also written:
'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'
Matthew 4:7 (NIV)*

For all who read this - I pray as Jesus said to ALL the churches
Rev. 2:7,11,17,29;3:6,13 & 22.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

And by the authority of Jesus, I bind any and all spirits of the evil one from stealing the word or that would hinder the hearing and receiving the word all in the name of Jesus and by the power of His blood. God, as You have said, our comforter or counselor, Holy Spirit will teach all truth to US that have believed and received You by faith. So we yield ourselves to You, Holy Spirit to teach in the name of Jesus our Lord. AMEN.

Many times I have heard the Christian say - Do not test God. Not long ago this statement so got my attention that I was lead to go to the scripture in hope to clarify just what does the Lord mean when He spoke this command for the people.

Jesus is quoting in Matt 4:17 or Luke 4:12 from
Deut. 6:16

Do not test the Lord your God as you did at Massah.

Before we go further, let me clarify the brief search in the Strong's Dictionary for the primary word 'test' in the Hebrew is

***nacah**,  **naw-saw'**; a primitive root; **to test**;
by implication to attempt :- adventure, assay, prove, tempt, try*

Most translations that I looked at use 'test' but the KJV uses 'prove' or 'tempt'.

As you can see, when God gave this as a command in Deut, He made reference to a time in the past to define or give an example so we can see what He meant. So we can go to this event in Massah (which means testing) and was also referred to as Meribah (which means quarreling)

Most all Christians have heard or read the story of the Israelites after leaving Egypt came to a time where they had no water. They began to grumble or quarrel with Moses as we read in

Exodus 17:1-2

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to

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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?"

You can see that Moses was put out with the people because they were complaining to Moses. Interesting what Moses said here "Why do you put the Lord to the test". WHAT? They had no water. It is estimated since there were about 600,000 men there would be two or three million people and their livestock, another 2 million animals. They were in need of water. SO - how is this a testing of God?

Exodus 17:3-5

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, "Walk on ahead 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."

Moses then in his faith and position with God, cried out to Him. God was once again faithful to His desire and plan for Israel not to harm them.

As written in

Jeremiah 29:11-13

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. [12] **Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.** [13] You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

God gave Moses the instructions and Moses obeyed and did it with faith. Moses believed what God said. He did not question if God would do what He said and definitely he did not say BUT GOD. Then God said to Moses that He was with him, standing before Moses.

Exodus 17:6

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." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Praise God. As I read I became repentant and praised God for His faithfulness. His love. His good which is His desire for us all. But look how the people responded EVERY time a hardship came after the great miracles God continuously showed them. They could not remember their position and deliverance in the road behind them. Their tracks were still in the sand one might say, and yet could not recall the amazing daily event of Manna for food, the cloud by day to cool and guide, the fire by night to warm and guide. Then there was the quail beyond their own imagination and what about the destroyed army, the walls of water and dry ground of the sea, the gold and silver in their hands, the first born still alive, and before these were the other 9 great deliverance from the pestilence and misfortune that came on the Egyptians who would not believe that the one true God is the great 'I AM'. Why? Why did God do these things? So that they would know He is their God and He 'is' with them.

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God is faithful and He has a plan not to harm us. The results we receive are very much based on the simple fact, "Do we believe He is faithful to what He has said?". Do we **trust** Him and believe He will do as He promised and that He has not forsaken us even in our trials and hardships?

Here is a real thought to ponder. What if Moses would not have obeyed in faith. What if even though he did not grumble as the people did but reasoned or questioned about 'the rock?'. Maybe asking how can a rock give water? We need water and unless God brings us to water we will surely die in the dry place. This reasoning would have been saying "I do not believe what God has said". It would possibly have resulted in near total death of all Israel and another 400 years to build the nation up again just as it was in the time of Joseph. Let us return to see what next occurred. Notice that Moses was needing water too. He knew God would provide. My guess would be, Moses had already come to God and asked for water. So his action of faith was trusting God as he waited in his thirst. Then his actions changed once God gave him a command, he obeyed with no doubt.

As verse 6 said "Moses did this before the elders of Israel". Moses named this place Massah and Meribah. This was done to remind the Israelites this is where they quarreled and tested the Lord.

Now with great awe and questions and excitement I read verse 7. Here you will see that God gives us a great revelation to Himself and what we do and say. Mercy sakes - What a God we serve. Now let us read -

Exodus 17:7

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?"

WOW - I thought this was about water. The thirst that the people were struggling and suffering with. Their reasoning of their mind and the cry of their body caused a reaction not of faith to trust and obey. Look what God shows them and us for today. This was not about water. It was the heart of the people. It was the question of faith. Do they believe the good that God had for them or only believe what they saw and felt. Notice what God said about the people's heart.

"Is the Lord among us or not?"

STOP. Ponder this for a moment. "Is the Lord among us or not?"

In doing so I have hope to bring forth revelation and truth that this will release powerful deliverance for life abundant for our souls (mind, will and emotions) and our bodies even in the momentary hardship or trial we may be in or may enter in the days ahead. (particularly the days of the end times that I believe we are in). And to hopefully bring my thinking and faith to another level as I hope the same for every reader of this teaching. I want to expel and destroy any limitation we might have put on God because of our hearts. The scripture says the heart reflects who we really are (Matt 12:34b). Just as it did with the people.

The water seemed to be the issue but the question that the heart of the people was - "Is the Lord among us or not?". This is a question of UNBELIEF. They reasoned in their mind

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that since they did not have water and it seem to be getting to a critical state, their bodies (the carnal flesh, what they saw in the natural) craved water and that God had gone home and was not with them. So they grumbled and did not believe. Here they let their mind (soul) and body, their flesh rule and not their faith. God was wanting them to do as Jer 29:12 In His plan to do good but they had to do as it says - **come - call - pray and God would listen**. They needed to trust what God had said. They needed to persevere in their faith (Isa 7:9). What part of God's will would they ask of God? Would it not be to merely agree that God 'is' and believe what He had said. But they did not and they so quickly forgot what God had done and was focused on what He had not done. Such a travesty for us today too. Focus on Jesus not on the hardship since this can cause us to be offended by God. Jesus said

Matthew 11:6 (KJV)

And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Matthew 11:6 (NIV)

Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

If you look at the passage from which this verse comes you see it is when John the Baptist sent his men to ask Jesus if He was the Christ. WHAT? John the Baptist, the greatest of ALL the prophets. John was questioning Immanuel, God with us (Matt 1:23, Isa 7:14). This question is the same that we see was asked by the Israelites in the wilderness.

"Is the Lord among us or not?"

But God, Jesus, did not rebuke John but only said something to remind him of the Word so John would remember and recall that these events spoken of in Isaiah about the Christ were the things that are happening now. REMEMBER as we - come - call - pray and God will listen. Here is an unanswered question as we see God's sovereignty at work. Why did John have to die. 1.) Was it in his unbelief like the Israelites who died in the wilderness?

Hebrews 3:19

So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

2.) Or was it because John's work was complete? If because of unbelief then we know not the work John would have continued in but if the later then the Sovereignty prevailed without telling us. What we must ask, "if I am asking God - is it in a wrong way? Am I really revealing my heart of my belief or unbelief? - "Is the Lord among us or not?" When we pray are we praying as Jesus did - never doubting:

As we find in the story of the resurrecting power of Lazarus by the faith of Jesus in the Father -

John 11:41-42

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. [42] I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

Jesus came and will come the second time for those who will believe !!!

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John 10:10b (NIV)

....I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10b (KJV)

...I am come that they might have **life**, and that they might **have it more abundantly**.

Notice from the KJV 'they might have'. Just a thought 'might'? What is the variable here? And along the same line of this question is found in the words 'to become' as seen next-

John 1:12 (KJV)

But as many as received him, to them gave he **power to become** the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

John 1:12 (NIV)

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave **the right to become** children of God-

Sons of God ... abundant life...are they found only in 'the faith' of Jesus or does it really enter into believing the Word of God with what James says - faith without works is dead. What is the works?

John 6:29

Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

I know you may think I am running in circles but you must see this simple answer to the question - When do we test God? Some say they have faith but really it is only the knowledge about Jesus, held in their soul - the mind and not true believing in Jesus from the heart. This is a frightening thing. Read Matt 7:13-14;21-23.

So I continue with what the Word says. We must agree with God with the spoken AMEN. This is to say Yes when we agree. First that He is among us and then agree yes to His plan for abundant life as revealed in the His Word, in Jesus the Savior. We must believe he exists and believe He rewards us (Heb 11:6). How? By our confession and by Coming to Him -Call upon Him - Asking Him in our time of need - BELIEVING HIM WITH OUR WORKS OF THE AMEN AS WE DECLARE HIS WORD AND PROMISES BACK TO HIM BOLDLY IN THANKSGIVING EXPECTING ALL THAT HE HAS PROMISED. **This can not be wavering based on our circumstances, hardships, or even the delay of God's response or by the reasoning of the mind of man. What we must do is stand and stand firm (Isa 7:9b, Eph 6:13-14, James 1:2-4). KNOWING by faith, believing that we will not starve of thirst (John 7:37-38) for the soul or for the body (Matt 6:25,33).**

We read in the Psalms a review of the Israelites and their sinful unbelief.

Psalm 78:37-43

their hearts were not loyal to him,

they **were not faithful** to his covenant.

[38] Yet he was merciful;

he forgave their iniquities

and did not destroy them.

Time after time he restrained his anger

and did not stir up his full wrath.

[39] He remembered that they were but flesh,

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a passing breeze that does not return.

[40] How often **they rebelled against him in the desert**
and grieved him in the wasteland!

[41] Again and again they **put God to the test**;
they vexed the Holy One of Israel.

[42] **They did not remember his power--**
the day he redeemed them from the oppressor,

[43] the day he displayed his miraculous signs in Egypt,
his wonders in the region of Zoan.

We can see God's heart break and His long suffering again in this passage when the people did the same thing over and over. Read Numbers 14:1-11 and hear God's response in verse 11-

Numbers 14:11

The Lord said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with **contempt?** How long will **they refuse to believe in me**, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them?"

Contempt or scorn. Meaning they put absolutely no value or trust in God's word... LOOK OUT - for God's wrath is righteous and His anger pure. God does not change (Mal 3:6).

Numbers 14:12

"I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you [Moses] into a nation greater and stronger than they."

But Moses interceded for them and God forgave them (v20) and nevertheless... verse 21 says...

Numbers 14:20-23

The Lord replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. [21] **Nevertheless**, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the Lord fills the whole earth, [22] not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who **disobeyed me and tested me ten times--** [23] not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. **No one** who has treated me with **contempt** will ever see it.

CAUTION: God said the men tested Him by their unbelief it was contemptuous. Do not anger God by being contemptuous about His Word. (If you ever have time do a study on contempt or scorn, scornful to see that God hates this attitude.)

Some say - do not be presumptuous with God. Can one be presumptuous when they stand on and believe what God has already declared. Or maybe those that are believing God's word with their bold 'yes' and 'amen' and 'asking' only exposes or reveals the contempt and unbelief of the one who says that this type of boldness and confidence is presuming on God. Is it not in fact the one who is testing God with contempt and unbelief calling this boldness presumptuous... Recall the story of the spies and the two (Joshua and Caleb) that boldly said let us take the land (repeating & believing God) did not die in the wilderness but did enter the land.

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Notice the indignation of Jesus when there was unbelief in his apostles.

Matthew 17:17-18

"O unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." [18] Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment.

Jesus previously had commanded them to go and preach, cast out demons, and heal the sick. They, for what ever reason, did not believe in the event of the demonized boy and therefore did not OBEY nor BELIEVE God. Here I think that even the elite 12 were testing God. Yet Jesus again with great patience and love gave them a very simple and direct instructions by showing what one can do when they believe and ACT on it.

Notice even though the unbelief was there they did the right and pleasing thing. They came to Jesus (God). As we should and as the Israelites should have done. They were seeking the truth. Jesus is truth, the word, God. (John 1:1, 17:17)

Matthew 17:20

He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. **Nothing will be impossible for you.**"

He said the smallest of faith when mixed with your action -'you can say', then nothing is impossible for you. The 'you' is you and me, when we believe and speak with no doubt. In Jesus said in Mark 11:21 - "Have faith in God!"

There is some 'how to' shown in the verse 21 that is found in the KJV.

Matthew 17:21

However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Notice this whole passage is about unbelief (not the power of the demon) ! Therefore this kind of unbelief does not go out unless you spend regular time in prayer and fasting with our God (you come, you ask, you abide in Him (John 15:7) and His Word is in you). Unless we build a relationship through prayer we do fall into the sin of unbelief. Allowing the power of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us and so we know He is with us. HE is standing before us. As we declare His promises, His Word, His LOVE for us. He will never forsake us nor leave us, as we are blessed and should be confident that He hears our prayers and will do as we ask. JUST do not doubt in your heart asking **"Is the Lord among us or not?"**

1 John 3:21-23

Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God [22] and **receive from him anything we ask,** because **we obey his commands and do what pleases him.** [23] **And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,** and to love one another as he commanded us.

What pleases God. YOU KNOW. Faith! (Heb 11:6) The noun but the action is to believe with our heart and our mouth. Roman 10:10.

Romans 10:10

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For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Let us look back now at a verse from Psalm 78 above. In verse 41 we see their hearts tested God which in turn vexed or limited God or holds back the hand of God. This is an interesting fact that many Christian would argue and reject and give a number of 'buts' and their explanations. The testing by the people vexed or limited God. WHAT? The Holy One, the Great I AM, the totally sovereign God (Elohim) can be vexed or limited by mere man.

Psalm 78:41 (NIV)

Again and again **they put God to the test;**
they vexed the Holy One of Israel.

This test, as we have seen - "Is God really amongst us (or with you or me)?"

Here in verse 41 we find this word 'vexed' which may not be clear so let us look at a few other translations:

Psalm 78:41 (KJV)

Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and **limited** the Holy One of Israel.

Psalm 78:41 (AMP)

And time and again they turned back and tempted God, **provoking** and incensing the Holy One of Israel.

Psalm 78:41 (NAS)

And again and again they tempted God,
And **pained** the Holy One of Israel.

Psalm 78:41 (NRS)

They tested God again and again,
and **provoked** the Holy One of Israel.

Please note that his Hebrew word (H8428) for vexed or limited is only found in this one scripture in all the bible. In its translation it is then subject to some variations of English words and is different. Based on the various words used it seems to give us two different directions to go. But it also shows God's response to the testing of God by the people.

I prefer the KJV that says God was limited. Even in God's sovereignty we limit Him to the extent of our faith, what we believe. So here is a question. If the people would have not rebelled but continued to remember and believe that God was still with them and would have believed and knew they would not die of thirst, what deliverance or mighty power would have been released for them from God as they thanked Him and asked for water, trusting knowing that it would be so? We can not really know since that was not the case. We can say God would have given water. A fact. Because He did just that even in their sin and because God is longsuffering and He was with them. It was only how and when.

There is another outcome that could have been. God could have divinely allowed them to live without water or food for a season. Just as their feet did not swell or their shoes wear

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out for forty years. A real wild thought for sure. Maybe not for the full 40 years but for a season to again to show and test them into a maturity they had not yet experienced in the power of God. Just as Jesus proclaimed to those who knew and could quote the scripture- "you error because you do not know scripture (His Word) nor **the power of God.**"

If they would have stayed in faith **knowing** the Great I AM would deliver them, they may have not had to get thirsty in the first place. There might have been a beautiful stream of water in the middle of the desert. It might have been just as it happened - "Moses strikes the rock so the people will have water", but just earlier before the great thirst and fear came over them. (Hhhmm - fear of what - the fear of judgement or death, another interesting teaching).

Or as James says - the perseverance in the hardship brings maturity not lacking in anything if you **endure without doubt or wavering.** So the event of the delay for water would have been void of God's anger because the people would not have been in unbelief or rebellion and this would have resulted in growth and maturity and for sure seen blessings. My guess is they would have been more likely ready to enter the promise land and not failed because of unbelief. *Where are you today in your hardships and trials?*

I choose the KJV and support the word 'limited' with this testimony from the scripture. I will build upon the point I want to make later (p13) from **Matt 13:58** and **Mark 6:5**.

Although God, Elohim, (In the beginning Elohim created) the high and lofty one, the great 'I AM' is all sovereign and fully in charge and owns everything, we find this verse

Psalm 115:15-16

May you be blessed by the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

[16] The highest heavens belong to the Lord,
but the earth he has given to man.

As He wants to bless us and since God has given us the earth and we have it as our home, one might say. Now the earth is really no different from the very house or apartment we live in. It is our domain, our kingdom. It is by our choice of invitation that we invite visitors. And in most cases our guests are limited by the freedom we give to them to do what they want or what we ask of them. NOW stop and think about this. Our domain is ours to rule and control.

Genesis 1:28 (NIV)

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and **subdue it. Rule over** the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 1:28 (KJV)

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and **subdue it: and have dominion over** the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

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There is so so so much here that I could expound on but it is too much for the scope of this teaching. I will try and reflect it with a simple concept found in scripture that I just recently heard that is found in the names of God from the order they appear in the scripture. The names are an example of the God that owns everything but is an intimate God and not intrusive. As the name changes you can see how it reflects the character of God in His dealings with man, who he loves. (John 3:16)

Beginning with **Elohim** with all power created heaven and earth by merely speaking. Then there were the progressive revelation of God to man in the following names...**Adonai, Jehovah** (and all its variations), **Immanuel, Savior, Holy Spirit** then finally **ABBA**.

Now we can Pray Daddy to the High and Lofty one, Elohim and at the same time He is our Savior and He lives in us, Holy Spirit, powerful and intimate. We see this so clearly in the parable of the **prodigal son**. The Father of two sons.

Seldom is the truth of the oldest son seen. Why is this? Maybe it is because of the assumption that Christians should understand who they are as sons of God. There are two sons. Which is the parable about? The oldest, the one in the Kingdom of the Father while the other is the lost one outside and returns or is brought in when he see his own desperate state. We get focused on the gospel of salvation and miss that most of what Jesus spoke about and commanded us to preach was to "Preach the Kingdom of God". He told Peter and the apostles that He gives us the keys to the kingdom of God. Keys is plural. One and most important key is the Key to the front door which is the rebirth of our spirit so that we can enter this marvelous Kingdom of God that has come to earth through the intimacy of a loving God (Immanuel, Abba, Holy Spirit). But the Kingdom of God is much more than just the first step of the reconciliation to God, but all the rights and privilege as sons of God, joint heirs with Jesus and God as our Father, Daddy. There are as many scriptures in this parable given to the older son as to the younger son. WHY? Kingdom life - God with us.

The first (oldest) son was a man that was with the father in his father estate and as the word says, joint heirs with his father. Yet why didn't this son live as such in his father's kingdom?

Luke 15:31

" 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and **everything I have is yours.**

Did the father say or does it seem he even implies that the oldest would be testing him or be presumptuous if the older son would have exercised his rights by acting on them. If he would have taken a goat and had a party with his friends would this have been presumptuous?. NO! Neither does our Father in heaven. Nor would the oldest have been testing the father in his position to boldly take a goat!

Again, why do you think that the older son did not seem to know this or live in this truth? I could speculate and put some subjective reason, but instead I will apply other scripture to see God's point of view as it is revealed by the Word of God. Because the older son seemed to be living less the abundant life now, there are these scriptures for us that **are** sons of God. Notice the 'US' or 'OUR' and the 'YOU' in these next two verses.

2 Peter 1:3-4

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His divine power has **given us everything we need for life** and godliness **through our knowledge of him** who called us by his own **glory and goodness**. [4] Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, **so that through them you may participate** in the divine nature and **escape the corruption in the world** caused by evil desires.

Then we see that Jesus said He was the gate through which whoever enters will be saved and **will come and go and find pasture**.

John 10:7-10

Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. [8] All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. [9] I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will **come in and go out, and find pasture**. [10] The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10b

I am come that they might **have life**, and that they might have it **more abundantly**.

Abundant life is found through the knowledge, **glory and goodness** of Jesus and as so has given His precious promises to us, those that will believe and act on them, not waiver or doubt and stand firm. Read the scriptures, 2 Peter 1:3-4, again to see the mighty truth for us now.

Here is a specific verse about the divine power of God's promises:

2 Cor. 1:20 (NIV)

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" **in Christ**. And so **through him** [Jesus] the "Amen" is **spoken by us** to the glory of God.

Col. 2:9-10

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, [10] and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

Col. 1:27

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

With these scriptures we see that God wants us to have within His Kingdom a more abundant life through the knowledge of His son, Jesus, who is called the 'Word of God' (Rev 19:13). To do this God has given us His precious promises by His divine power to live accordingly.

I say all this to attempt to establish the incredible and awesome love and desired will of the Father has for us that believe. Just the oldest son could have had if he would have had understanding **with faith an no doubt**.

When we look back at the hearts of the Israelites when they asked -

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“Is the Lord among us or not?”

this reflects their level of faith. They did not believe God as shown by their actions and words, what they confessed (Rom 10:10)

So **“When do we test God?”**

It seems clear that it is when we do not believe His Word, His promises, His commands AND ACT ON THEM. To test God in the simplest form is to doubt and live in unbelief which reflects our hearts and says “Is the Lord among us or not?” This is the simplest of views. Yet many will argue that they believe and that God is with them and yet they will not believe what God has said as testified by their words and actions. NOR their AMEN to His promises for them personally and intimately which is for each of US.

Why was the Israelites in the desert - in the wilderness - lost and thirsty? ONE VERY DIRECT REASON.

God said go take possession - I am with you. YET THEY DID NOT GO BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF and by not acting on the God’s command - “Go take...” Take what? What he had promised through His word that He gave them. Instead they received what they did confess. They died in the wilderness.

Hebrews 3:16-19

Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? [17] And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? [18] And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? [19] So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

This is what God said - they rebelled - they sinned - they disobeyed and this is because of their UNBELIEF. Because they tested God by not believing that God WAS with them and this again was the core of their unbelief. This same attitude and heart remained with them into the wilderness and their heart was revealed when they said (Ex 17:17)

“Is the Lord among us or not?”

As Psalm 78:41 says their testing, limited, vexed, provoked, incensed and pained the Holy One of Israel. This caused God to be angry.

As written earlier in Hebrews 3 that recites Psalm 95:6-11

Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;
[7] for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

Today, if you hear his voice,
[8] do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah,
as you did that day at Massah in the desert,

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- [9] where your fathers tested and tried me,
though they had seen what I did.
- [10] For forty years I was angry with that generation;
I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray,
and they have not known my ways."
- [11] **So I declared on oath in my anger,**
"They shall never enter my rest."

As referred to a few pages back, that 'they limited the Holy One of Israel' can be seen clearly in the this verse which is also supportive of the conclusion that unbelief is how we test God. The unbelief is spoken and focused on what God has not done therefore asking - **"Is the Lord among us or not?"** Remember God said we should **confess with our mouth** by agreeing with Him about ALL His promises. How do we confess with our mouth?

First is by praying with faith. Pray believing whatever we ask for AS STATED and in ACCORDANCE to His precious promises for life and godliness. Second, while we PERSEVERE in all the hardships and trial as we expect by faith to receive that which we have asked and this perseverance brings maturity and readiness for the greater things God will ask of US and do for us as sons of God.

Now look at this testimony from the scripture in support of 'limited God' (see p 9)
Matthew 13:58

And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

Mark 6:5

He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.

Limit the Holy One of Israel. God himself could NOT do any miracles because of the unbelief of the people. The mighty hand of the sovereign Lord was held back, restricted.

Ask yourself - is my heart hardened to His Word, the Word of God, the word that is truth?

- Do I believe not just in my talk but in my actions and reactions?
- Have I truly entered His rest? The Sabbath Rest that is mine as joint heir with Christ.
- Have I taken full advantage of the 'right to become' all that He has said?

I think not - NOT even close. Few have but most have not. If the church could get the truth not just down in their soul, (mind, emotions and will) but into their heart that they have the same position as the oldest son in the passage of the prodigal son, joint heirs with Jesus, seated in heavenly places, then from the heart would speak the truth what God's good and perfect will is (Heb 12:2) and we would then be seen by the world as blessed and highly favored.

How do we claim this and receive it? First we believe what God has said. Then we confess it with our mouth, AMEN, agree. We come, we ask, we believe because this He has commanded. Now. NOW. **NOW**, not tomorrow faith is...

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for and certain of what we do not see.

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Eccles. 12:13-14

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. [14] For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Fear God and OBEY Him.

He said GO take possession of the land I am giving you. ACTION on our part to take the rightful possession of the Kingdom of God where we find all God's promises which are ours when we believe and SAY SO with our AMEN.

This is NOT done through our soulish self (carnal flesh) or evil desires or by reasoning of the mind (soul) but by faith in God, believing in our heart, confessing with our mouth (Rom 10:9-10). Then it is God who work in us (Phil 2:13) by the personal God with us, Holy Spirit. As it is written

Romans 8:14

because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Philip. 2:13

for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

2 Peter 1:3

His **divine power has given us everything we need for** life and **godliness** through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Conclusion - When do we test God?

WE test God when we are contemptuous toward the Word of God and not believing His word in our confession or lack of confession of agreement. When we sit and presume God will do what He promised without our acting on them passively think that He will take care of our needs. God is a faith God. He is a God of action by His word. So we must copy our Father, our God showing Him we know and believe His word by coming, asking, expecting according to His word. By faith, first believing, go (action), take (action) possess (action) the kingdom of God. The violent take (action) it by force. The power of prayer in faith.

Matthew 11:12

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

This violent force would include remembering the great and mighty things that God has done as well as what He said He would do now and in the future. And focusing on the praise and worship of God at all times without murmuring and complaining as we confess and wait for the promise to manifest as we

Seek God

Call upon God

Come and pray to God and He will listen.

- Boldly Go and Take Possession of every promise as you confess with your spoken word 'YES' and 'Amen' and expect it by faith through calm times or turmoil and hardships - persevere.

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2 Peter 1:3-4

His **divine power** has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us **by his own glory and goodness**. [4] Through these he has given us his very great and **precious promises**, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

2 Cor. 1:20

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is **spoken by us** to the glory of God.

1 Cor. 4:20

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk **but of power**.

Mark 9:23

"If you can'?" said Jesus. **"Everything is possible for him who believes."**

Mark 11:22

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered.

Mark 11:24

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, **believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.**

If you LOVE GOD, you will obey His commands. HERE he said believe and expect it. The verb 'have received' is before you see with your carnal flesh, the natural sight.

John 16:23-24

In that day you will no longer ask me anything. **I tell you the truth**, my Father will give you **whatever you ask in my name**. [24] Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. **Ask and you will receive,**
and your joy will be complete.

Do not test God with unbelief and be contemptuous toward His Word, Jesus.

Remember this is the Holy Spirit desire convict all of the single 'sin' - not sins.

John 16:7-9 [Jesus is speaking]

But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor [Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. [8] When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to **sin** and righteousness and judgment: [9] **in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;** [Billy's inserts].

ARE YOU TESTING GOD BY NOT BELIEVING and ACTING ON HIS WORD, JESUS?

MARANATHA!

Other studies you may find good for following up with this one.

'The Sin' 'The Triune Man's Battle' www.the-ministry.ORG.

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