

# Resonate

BIBLE STUDY

**“WATER WAYS:  
“WATER” YOUR PROBLEMS?”**

We all have problems. How are we dealing with them? There are appropriate ways of coping but then there are some negative ones as well. We will explore both this week.

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**DAY**  
**1**

**Today's Scripture:**  
Exodus 17:1-2

***The Word***

Have you ever seen a child throw a temper tantrum? He gets mad about not getting his way and next thing you know, he is hollering, kicking, throwing punches, and doing whatever else he can to try to get what he wants. Of course, a wise parent does not give into this behavior. In fact, the child is usually disciplined.

As adults, we may not outwardly throw a temper tantrum but we may have one in our hearts. We get upset that life is not going the way we think it should. When we do this, our Heavenly Parent does not give into our behavior. The nation of Israel showcased many a temper tantrum. These adults could not stop acting like toddlers.

### ***Exodus 17:1***

*<sup>1</sup> The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.*

**Verse 1-2:** These people were facing a difficult time. They were in a place without water. That is a basic necessity of life. Understandably, we would be upset if we were deprived of water. Looking only at their situation, their complaints seems valid.

But before you begin to justify your negative attitude, I want you to focus on one phrase “traveling from place to place as the Lord commanded.” They had been brought to this place by the Lord. God had led them to a place with no water. God leads us into difficult circumstances as well. I do not know what you have been through, the problems you may be facing now, or even what difficult circumstances are on its way but this truth I can tell you: no situation comes into your life without God allowing it.

Why would God allow problems into our lives? Shouldn't he just make our lives happy, easy, and problem-free? He could but where would our growth be? It takes the sun and the rain for a plant to grow. Good and bad times in our life stimulate growth in our lives. The Lord allowed the people to come to the end of their resources so they would turn to Him for help. Sadly, they turned to complaining instead.

## **Exodus 17:2**

<sup>2</sup> 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?"

**Verse 2:** I think this situation has some humor in it. Here Moses is in the exact same predicament as they are yet they say, "Give us water". Their negativity had given them poor judgment. They expected a person to be the answer to their needs instead of God.

Moses recognized their sin and confronted them with the fact that their quarrel is not against a person but against the Lord. Whenever we get mad at our situation, we are in fact getting mad at God. We may not say it directly but the truth is that we are reacting to our circumstances thus we are reacting against the One who allowed the problems to come into our lives.

Whenever we complain, we are indirectly speaking against God. We are "testing" His sovereignty, His Lordship, His divine will. It is sin. Complaining leads to more problems as we will discover tomorrow. For now, let's deal with any tendency to complain in our lives. We must stop testing the Lord.

## ***Up Close and Personal***

Confess any leanings toward complaining in your life.

What are problems that you are experiencing right now?

How will you deal with the situation that will honor the Lord instead of test Him?

If you know someone who complains to you, will you confront this sin in love?

If you are a complainer, will you ask forgiveness to those to whom you have complained?

# DAY 2

**Today's Scripture:**  
Exodus 17:3-4

***The Word***

I worked with a lady who would complain all the time. She was negative about everything. One day she called me when I was having one of those wonderful types of days and feeling extraordinarily happy. By the end of our phone call, I felt depressed. Her attitude affected me and made me feel like the world truly was a dark place.

The Israelites complaints led to dark and gloomy thoughts. They became irrational the more they focused on their problems.

## **Exodus 17:3**

*<sup>3</sup> 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?"*

**Verse 3:** The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years. They were in bondage. Eighty years earlier, the pharaoh had commanded the murdering of every male baby. They were being abused and mistreated. God had sent Moses to rescue these people from their terrible circumstances. He miraculously intervened through a series of ten plagues which resulted in their release from Egypt. When the Egyptian army pursued them, the Lord parted the Red Sea so the Israelites could walk through and then He closed the waters upon the Egyptians. Why would God do all that just to see His people die? Complaining leads to a wrong outlook on life as well as on God. We do not see Him or His ways clearly.

The people refused to stop their complaining and which led to a distorted view of life. When the complaining did not stop it led to irrational anger.

## **Exodus 17:4**

*<sup>4</sup> Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me."*

**Verse 4:** The people were ready to kill Moses. The man who led them out of Egypt on the behalf of God is now having his life threatened. These people who had been mistreated were now mistreating others. Their negative ways had made them become cruel. Did they wake up thinking, "I think I will try to kill someone today"? No, they slowly came to this point because they refused to repent from their complaining spirit.

Complaining is a sin and it leads to more sin. It causes others to fall. I confess that at one of my former jobs I complained about another employee. This caused others to view this person differently. I led others into sin because I complained. My anger ultimately was against the Lord even if I didn't say it to Him. Deep down I wondered, "Why does that person have to work here?" God had allowed that person to work there and instead of asking for His help to deal with the person, I faced the situation with extreme negativity which led to a permanent rift between us. I was wrong.

If you are in the complaining stage, repent. If complaining has led to irrational thinking, repent. If irrational thinking has led to anger, repent. It's time to deal with the sin of complaining and its consequences now.

## ***Up Close and Personal***

Ask the Lord to show you if the sin of complaining has led to more sin in your life or the life of others. Pray for His mercy and grace.

How have you experienced the sins that stem from complaining?

If we remove complaining from our lives, what should we replace it with?

**DAY**  
**3**

**Today's Scripture:**  
Exodus 17:3-6

***The Word***

The Israelites give us an example of how not to handle problems. Moses, on the other hand, gives a clear picture of what we should do when difficulties come our way.

### ***Exodus 17:3***

<sup>3</sup> *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?"*

**Verse 3-6:** While the Israelites were complaining to Moses about water, they forgot one important fact: Moses was in the same place they were. He, also, was deprived water. It was not as if he had a case of bottled water in his tent. He was in the exact same circumstances. Yet, he handled the situation differently.

### **Exodus 17:4**

<sup>4</sup> Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me."

**Verse 4:** Moses prayed. That is the answer to any problem you are facing. Don't go talk to co-workers and friends, for they may make it worse. Instead, go to the Lord first and talk to Him about what you are dealing with. He will listen to you. Listen also to Him. Through His Word, He will speak to you.

### **Exodus 17:5-6**

<sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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.

**Verse 5-6:** God gave Moses specific instructions in handling the situation. Moses obeyed and everyone received the benefits.

I faced a difficult situation recently and prayed to the Lord about it. Through Bible study, I "heard" His answer; He told me to be still and wait for His deliverance. This was not easy for me to do. I wanted to "handle it". But I did as He said and the problem worked out in a marvelous way. Go to the Lord with your problems. Let Him direct you. Moses got to be a part of a miracle. The Israelites only got a complaining session. I'd much rather experience a miracle, wouldn't you?

## ***Up Close and Personal***

Ask the Lord to show you what to do concerning the problems you are facing.

How will you make prayer a priority in your life?

How will you incorporate Bible study in your day to day routine?

What do you think the benefits of prayer and Bible study are?

**DAY**

**4**

***The Word***

**Today's Scripture:**

Exodus 17:7; Psalm 95; Matthew 6:25-33

In ancient times places were named as reminders of events. After the incident of no water and then water from a rock, Moses named the area after what had been experienced there. The names are not very nice.

### **Exodus 17:7**

*<sup>7</sup> 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?"*

**Verse 7:** Massah and Meribah are far from weird words. Psalm 95 we discover that these words meant "'testing' for Massah and 'rebellion' for Meribah." (NIV text note). Whenever the Israelites were at that place they were reminded of their sin. Some of us have been led to difficult places by the Lord. How would He name them? Did we come through the situation with "humility and obedience" or with "testing and rebellion"?

Psalm 95 encourages us to not sin like the Israelites did at this point in their journey. This psalm was written hundreds of years after this moment in time. Even then, people were learning from the mistakes of Israel. We need to do the same today.

### **Psalm 95:8-11**

*<sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah,  
as you did that day at Massah in the desert,*

*<sup>9</sup> where your fathers tested and tried me,  
though they had seen what I did.*

*<sup>10</sup> 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."*

*<sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger,  
"They shall never enter my rest."*

**Verse 8-11:** The people had seen God's miraculous salvation. They had been delivered from the bondage of Egypt. Yet, they did not believe the Lord would provide for their need of water. Complaining is the antithesis of faith. Their lack of faith culminated in the refusal to believe they could win the fight against the Canaanites to

claim the Promised Land. This led to a generation being punished. They wandered the desert for forty years. Lack of faith led to lack of purpose. They forfeited their right to live in the land of blessing.

We, too, have witnessed a miraculous salvation. We have been delivered from the bondage of sin. Whenever we complain, we are showing our lack of faith in the God whom we claim to trust with our eternal lives. If He can provide for our redemption from eternal death, surely He can take care of our day to day needs. Do not forfeit the blessings of peace because you are consumed with worry!

### **Matthew 6:25-33**

*<sup>25</sup>"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup>Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"*

*<sup>28</sup>"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. <sup>29</sup>Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup>For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup>But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

**Verse 25-33:** Complaining and worry go hand in hand. They are the result of lack of faith. We need to build our faith in the Lord of our salvation. In order to do this, we need to seek His kingdom and His righteousness. This puts our focus on the Lord instead of our problems. When we look at Him, He is magnified in our sight. We realize He is able to handle any situation in our lives. However, when we look at our problems, they are magnified. Thus the old adage, making a mountain out of a molehill. We must magnify God. This is done through praise.

### **Psalm 95:1**

*<sup>1</sup> Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;  
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.*

**Verse 1:** Praise defeats complaining, negativity, and worry. If you have these qualities in your life, then you lack faith. You must build your faith through worship of God.

## **Psalm 95:2**

<sup>2</sup> *Let us come before him with thanksgiving  
and extol him with music and song.*

**Verse 2:** Thanksgiving is a focus on how God has provided in the past. This helps remind you that since the Lord has helped you before, He will be faithful to you again.

## **Psalm 95:3-5**

<sup>3</sup> *For the LORD is the great God,  
the great King above all gods.*

<sup>4</sup> *In his hand are the depths of the earth,  
and the mountain peaks belong to him.*

<sup>5</sup> *The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.*

**Verse 1:** Spend time meditating on the greatness of God. When you think about His power and might, you will realize how He can handle all of your problems.

## **Psalm 95:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> *Come, let us bow down in worship,  
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;*

<sup>7</sup> *for he is our God  
and we are the people of his pasture,  
the flock under his care.  
Today, if you hear his voice,*

**Verse 1:** Choose to worship Him. He is your Creator, He made you. He knows you through and through. The Lord loves you; He has called you as His own. He will guide you and care for you.

May complaining cease and praises ring out!

## ***Up Close and Personal***

Spend time in praise and worship of your Lord.

How do you usually handle problems?

How can you begin to cultivate a life of praise, even when facing difficult times?

What attribute of God encourages you as you are facing bad times?

**DAY**  
**5**

***The Word***

**Today's Scripture:**

Exodus 13:21-22; Psalm 105:41; Isaiah 55:6-8

I love the creativity of God. I am amazed by this aspect of who He is. The story we studied this week should remind us of His “creative solutions”. Recall the situation with me: the people were in a place without water. A logical solution would be: go to a place that has water. However, the people knew not to move. They at least were obedient in one aspect, they did not move unless the pillar cloud of God's Presence moved.

### **Exodus 13:21-22**

*<sup>21</sup> By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. <sup>22</sup> Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.*

**Verse 21-22:** The people were physically following the pillar cloud but their hearts were far from Him. As soon as the pillar cloud led them to a difficult place, their true thoughts were revealed. It is during difficult times that our true relationship with God is shown. We can say “praise the Lord” during good times but are we giving Him praise when life is hard? These people did not want to experience hardship. They wanted what they wanted now. Instead of waiting on God's answer, they tried to bully Moses. On the other hand, Moses asked for the Lord's help, and he got a creative solution: hit a rock.

### **Psalm 105:41**

*<sup>41</sup> He opened the rock, and water gushed out;  
like a river it flowed in the desert.*

**Verse 41:** This was no trickle of water. It was a gushing stream. God's answers to our problems are not mediocre. Instead, His creative solutions are more than ample to handle the situation.

What problem are you facing? Is it worse than no water in a desert? Please know that the God who worked a miracle for the Israelites is more than able to help you. The answer to your problem may be something you never even thought about because God thinks differently than you!

### ***Isaiah 55:8***

*<sup>8</sup> "For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways,"  
declares the LORD.*

**Verse 8:** To access the creative solutions of God, there are some things we must do. We must seek, call, and repent.

### ***Isaiah 55:6-7***

*<sup>6</sup> Seek the LORD while he may be found;  
call on him while he is near.*

*<sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way  
and the evil man his thoughts.  
Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him,  
and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

**Verse 6-7:** Seek the Lord. Do not focus on your problems, or your ideas of how to work it out, or even asking others what to do. Seek God. Call to Him, he will listen to your prayers. Repent of your sin whether it is complaining, worrying, or whatever else. Repent. Turn away from your futile ways of handling problems and let the Lord choose His timing and His way. Then, you will see His mighty work on your behalf!

## ***Up Close and Personal***

Thank the Lord that His ways and thoughts are higher than ours.

What are some creative solutions that God has worked in your behalf?

How does remembering God's intervention in the past help you now?