

Where's Your Chair?

Exodus 17 1-7



Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, on that day at Massah in the wilderness,
when your forebears tested me,
and put me to the proof though they had seen my works.

Psalm 95:8-9

Praising:

Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth
flow;
let the fiery, cloudy pillar lead me
all my journey through:
strong deliverer, be thou still my
strength and shield.

Reading:

Exodus 17:1-7
Israel puts God to the test

In times of acute need when its
faith had been put to the test,
Israel experienced the Lord's
care and protection in
unmistakable ways. But things
come dramatically to a head
when thirst gets the better of
Israel at Rephidim. The people
confront Moses and leave him
feeling in danger of his life.
Essentially, Israel are demanding
proof that God really is in their

midst. After all the Lord has
already done for them,
questioning God's loyalty on this
basic level seems to cross a
spiritual line. Echoes of this Old
Testament confrontation find their
way through to the New
Testament and Jesus' final
emphatic words 'I am with you
always'. The scene of this
wilderness showdown is named
after two Hebrew verbs: Massah
from 'test', and Meribah from 'find
fault'. Ultimately, both names
become memorials to Israel's
faithlessness.

Listening:

Praying:

Lord when we're tempted to give
up on you, hold us back

- with past experiences of your
constancy pointing to love
eternal in your nearer
presence
- with your people testifying in
every age to the universal
reality of your Holy Spirit
- with the assurance of the
empty tomb that in Christ even
death will give way to new life

Father: in the face of loss and let-
down, injustice and suffering,
even tragedy and grief, substitute
my efforts to figure things out
with a readiness to trust that you
are with me. Amen

Doing:

Tuesday, 23 August 2016