

Testing for Obedience

Lesson 9

Ps. 26:2

"Test me, O LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind".

Throughout the Old Testament, we see many situations in which God tests His people in order to determine if they will follow Him or follow the systems of this world.

The nation of Israel was tested many times during the 40-year sojourn in the wilderness:

Deut. 8:2 *"Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands".*

You might ask, "Why does God need to test us? Doesn't He know everything, including what we would do in every situation?" Yes, God knows, but we don't know ourselves! God doesn't test us in order to find out something He doesn't already know. He tests us so that we can learn about ourselves and His love, power and faithfulness.

In Genesis 22, God tested Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his son Isaac. By demanding that Isaac be sacrificed, God seemed to be nullifying His covenant of making a great nation of Abraham. How could God's promise be fulfilled if Isaac was dead?

God tested Abraham to reveal whether or not Abraham truly trusted His promise. Yes, God knew what Abraham would do, but He wanted Abraham to know as well. So God put Abraham to the test and Abraham passed. As Abraham raised the knife to sacrifice his own son, God stopped him and provided a sacrificial ram instead.

Every test involves obedience in one way or another. When God tests us, He reveals the true state of our hearts.

Are we obedient to His will, or are we self-willed?

We might think we know the answer, but we would never truly know unless we were tested.

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Roundtable Discussion

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1. Have you ever been tested by God? In what way?
2. Do you think that God could get the same results by doing it another way?
3. Do you feel you are spiritually ready to be tested by God? If not, do you think that will stop Him?
4. If you can, pause for a moment and ask yourself where you think God might or may be testing you. Talk about it if you like.