

On the Corner Fringe: Is God Among Us? November 22, 2017

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at: <https://cornerfringe.com/media/t36xxgh/otcf-is-god-among-us>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

On the Corner Fringe: Is God Among Us?

This teaching from **Pastor Daniel Joseph** of **Corner Fringe Ministries** explores the biblical narrative of the **Israelites** in the **Wilderness of Sin** as a framework for understanding modern faith. Daniel highlights how the ancient travelers succumbed to **complaint and doubt** when faced with physical thirst, ultimately questioning if **God** was truly with them. He argues that such **trials and tribulations** are intentional divine tests designed to **humble believers** and reveal the true contents of their hearts. Rather than reacting with **blame or skepticism** when expectations are not met, he encourages individuals to remain **steadfast and prayerful**. The overarching message serves as an exhortation to **hold fast** to spiritual promises despite the inevitable difficulties of earthly life. Thus, the wilderness is presented as a **metaphorical proving ground** where one must choose between crumbling under pressure or trusting in **divine faithfulness**.

[Daniel Joseph]



Welcome to *On the Fringe*. Today, I want to take you to the Book of Exodus and get into Chapter 17. In Exodus Chapter 17, we find the children of Israel are brought into the Wilderness of Sin (סִינַי, pronounced "seen"), or in your English Bibles, it's literally spelled S-I-N, and we would typically say the Wilderness of Sin, and what we're going to find is that it is appropriately named. Ultimately, in Hebrew, it really means "thorn" or "clay." But the children of Israel are brought here, and something begins to unfold: they are actually thirsty, and in their minds, they're dying of thirst. In fact, what we

read as we get to Exodus 17:3 is, **"And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, 'Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?'"**

So, the children of Israel are confronted with an actual physical need. They're confronted with trials and tribulations, and what do they do? They immediately placed blame on *Moshe*. They ultimately place the blame on God because their expectations were not met. See the whole reason for what they were told: when they were going to be brought out of Egypt, they were going to inherit vineyards that they didn't plant, they were going to have houses that they didn't build, and they were going to have wells that they didn't dig. Well, here they are in the Wilderness of Sin. Where are these things? None of these promises

were actually attainable at the moment, and therefore they began to stumble. Their faith starts to crumble, if you will, and I really think there's a profound lesson here for us.

You remember Paul writes in Romans 15:4—**For whatever things were written before were written for our learning...** And how many times have we gotten in need, and rather than responding, we reacted? And we react by blaming God and calling God into question. Oh, if God is among us, then why am I going through this? Why am I having to deal with these issues in life? And believe me, when you get into these trials and tribulations, your flesh will want to respond by immediately blaming everyone else and God Himself for your problems.

And that's a scary thing. And I say it's a scary thing because it's actually falling into the sin of tempting the LORD your God. And so, as we continue to read the story in chapter 17, this is what we read: Exodus 17:7—**So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"**

I mean, just think about how profound it is and the lesson that we are to draw from here. That when our little worlds aren't going perfectly, we start throwing a fit and getting angry. When you feel that in your flesh, go to your knees; this is where we need to drop to our knees. This is where we need to melt our hearts before the Living God. This is where we need to wait on the LORD.

This is where we need to trust in His faithfulness, in His holiness, despite everything you are literally experiencing. You may be going through trials and tribulations. You may actually be in need. I mean, even to the point where it could be food and water, just as we see it happened with Israel. But are we going to fall? Is our faith that weak that we're going to crumble and we're going to say, "Is the LORD among us or not?" Why should this happen? Why is this happening to me?

And how many times can I tell you, personally, that I've heard people ask, "Why is this happening to me?" Not recognizing, not being taught, and not being equipped with the reality that in this life, this life and on this earth, this is our wilderness and this is our test.

And we read in Deuteronomy 8:2, **"And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."** Whether you would hold fast and believe in Him and believe that He will actually carry out His promises because He said He would. So, no matter what we experience in this life, we will not be shaken. We will hold fast. We will hold firm to the very end.

And so, I just encourage you, brothers and sisters, to hold fast. Hold fast. —Psalm 46:10—**Be still, and know that I am God...** What He has promised us, all this goodness and all this perfection and the safety and the peace and the shalom—it will come to us if you hold fast to the end. But know that this life will be fraught with trials and tribulations.

Well, that's all for this week. I just encourage you to continue in the faith, and when you are up against these trials and tribulations, call upon His name. Go to prayer and pray to Him. Amen? Well, bless you and have a great week.

Is God Among Us?

Navigating the Wilderness of Trial

A biblical framework for responding to life's hardships with faith instead of doubt, based on the Israelites' experience in Exodus 17.

THE WILDERNESS TRAP



THE WILDERNESS OF SIN

A symbolic and physical place of trial where unmet expectations lead to crumbling faith.

THE DANGER OF REACTING VS. RESPONDING

Israelites reacted by blaming leadership and God instead of responding with trust in His promises.

"IS THE LORD AMONG US OR NOT?"

This question represents the sin of "tempting God" when our circumstances become uncomfortable.

THE PURPOSE OF THE TEST

TRIALS REVEAL THE HEART

Deuteronomy 8:2 teaches that God uses the wilderness to humble and test our obedience.

DROP TO YOUR KNEES

When the flesh wants to complain, the solution is to melt your heart in prayer.



HOLD FAST TO THE END

True peace and "Shalom" are promised to those who remain unshaken through life's tribulations.

#© NotebookLM