

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Making Trial of God

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The inspired writer of Hebrews draws the Hebrew Christians back to what their father's did to God in Israel's early existence in the wilderness as they left Egyptian bondage for the promised land. “Where your fathers tried me by proving me...” (Hebrews 3:9). No one is to “*make trial*” or “*tempt*” the Lord our God (Deut. 6:16, Matt. 4:6). The word “trial” denotes the idea of “tempting” God or “proving” Him.

It is not that God cannot be proven. For example, Peter encourages those who have “*tasted that the Lord is gracious*” to continue to grow in the word (I Peter 2:2-3). By conforming to God's revelation, and wisdom we “*may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God*” (Romans 12:2). We can prove to ourselves and others by following God's way and tasting of God's blessings that God is gracious and one worthy of our total commitment.

The making trial of God or the proving God that is condemned by Moses and Jesus, is when one demands God to act in a certain way determined by one-

self, when the person is ungrateful for the blessings and provisions already given to him or her by God.

For example, Paul reminds the Christian to not be like the Israelites who made “*trial of the Lord and perished by the serpents*” (I Corinthians 10:9). This event is recorded in Numbers 21:4-6 when the people journeyed from mount Hor and were “*discouraged*” (Numbers 21:4). They complained that “*there is no bread, and there is no water...*” (Numbers 21:5). The people were “*speaking against*” God questioning his plan for bringing them out of Egypt, accusing Him that such a plan was so they would die in the wilderness (Numbers 21:5). They were not only manifesting a lack of confidence in the way of God, but also putting down the provisions He was giving them. Notice they were saying in their complaint, “*our soul loatheth this light bread*” (Numbers 21:5).

God was feeding them with manna from heaven, but they wanted bread after their own “*desire*” (Psalm 78:18). If they did not get what they wanted and in the way they wanted it, then

God's faithfulness was in question.

Why did Jesus respond with the demand to not make trial of God when tempted of the Devil (Matthew 4:7)? It was not that the Devil was failing to refer to Scripture, but that he was determining the circumstance in order for the passage to be fulfilled. He was demanding that Jesus cast himself towards the ground from the high pinnacle of the temple (Matthew 4:5). Psalm 91:11-12 is the promise of God's faithfulness for protecting the Israelites from harm as they followed the ways of Jehovah, not by defying the laws of gravity and place oneself in danger. Such action is the sin of tempting or making trial of God.

We can make trial of God today when you have bread and water before you and demand that if God does not give you a steak and a baked potato, then his promise of Matthew 6:33—giving us all the necessities of life—is not being fulfilled. He is giving you provisions—bread and water. Do not make trial of the Lord thy God!

Do not make trial of God and therefore fail to enter in to God's rest (Hebrews 3:9-11).