

**"Jehovah Rapha"**

**Exodus 15**

**INTRODUCTION:** In our study of the names of God so far, we have looked at three of His names.

1. **Jehovah Jireh** - The Lord will Provide
2. **Jehovah Nissi** - The Lord is our Banner
3. **El Roi** - The Lord who sees all.

The name which we are going to consider tonight is found in several different places in the Bible but the context which we are going to look at is found in Exodus 15. When we studied the name, Jehovah Nissi we touched upon the passage we are going to look at tonight, but we did not go very deep. Tonight, we shall look much closer at the text as we see the name "JEHOVAH RAPHA" which means "The Lord who Heals".

**I. Background**

In Exodus 15 we find the people of Israel singing a song because God had delivered them from the hand of the Egyptians by bringing them through the Red Sea and by drowning the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

**Notice Exodus 15:20-21**

The they began their journey into the wilderness and were only three days deep when they ran out of water.

**Notice Exodus 15:22**

So, I want you to get the picture here. They have been three days on their journey and they are now very thirsty. The weather is hot, and the land is parched from the heat. Those who are in the front look at ahead and they notice a body of water and they begin to run. When they reach the water, they drop to their knees and they begin to drink but to their disappointment the water bitter. Imagine their disappointment when the first ones there spewed the water out, faces filled with disgust. The news went out: The water was brackish and undrinkable. The disappointment was staggering.

**Notice Exodus 15:23-24**

Now the questions would begin to circulate.

Why did God allow this to happen? Why did God map out such a route? Why did the God with the Pillar of Cloud and Fire lead us headlong into a blazing, waterless wasteland? Why the terrible disappointment? The answer is in the next verse.

## II. The Test

### Notice Exodus 15:25

I want to focus upon the last phrase in this verse before we consider the tree cast into the waters. The verse says, "**and there He proved them**". This was a test for Israel. How quickly they had forgotten the parting of the Red Sea only days before.

### Application:

We have talked much about this subject before but because we are just like Israel and we forget it is good for us all to be reminded of the application here. God had brought them to a place that was dry and barren because He desired for them to remember what He had done at the Red Sea and then to fully trust in Him for the water they needed, but they failed. They murmured against Moses which means they blamed him for the lack of water.

Our lives consist of a series of tests and they are all designed to cause us to fully trust God for each one of the tests. This is something that we all need to understand because when the tests come if we are not prepared then we begin to question God or in our frustration we lash out at others just as Israel did to Moses. As we have considered before we need to remember the words of Peter.

### 1 Peter 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, **think it not strange** concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

Let me show you some verses that speak of the tests that come into our lives.

### 1 Chronicles 29:17a

<sup>17</sup>I know also, my God, **that thou triest the heart**, and hast pleasure in uprightness.

### Proverbs 17:3

<sup>3</sup> The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but **the LORD trieth the hearts**.

Let me explain what the writer is saying here. Silver is refined in the fining pot, and gold is refined in the furnace. But we are refined in the tests of this life which God allows to come into our lives.

Let me show you what Moses recorded in Deuteronomy.

### Deuteronomy 8:2-3

<sup>2</sup> And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and **to prove thee**, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

<sup>3</sup> And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; **that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.**

The tests which Israel faced in the wilderness were to make them dependent upon the Lord. The tests which we face are also designed to make us dependent upon the Lord. We must understand that if it were not for the storms, tests, and the trials we would all turn away from God and we would become independent. That is not what God desires. He desires that we lean upon Him as we go through life and it is the tests and the trials which keep us dependent upon Him. The tests are very valuable for this very reason.

Job knew the importance of the tests.

#### **Job 23:10**

<sup>10</sup> But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, **I shall come forth as gold.**

Let us notice the words that Isaiah recorded concerning testing.

#### **Isaiah 48:9-11**

<sup>9</sup> For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

<sup>10</sup> Behold, **I have refined thee**, but not with silver; **I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.**

<sup>11</sup> **For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it:** for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.

God refined Israel for His own sake. You see the people of Israel were God representatives on the earth. The more they were refined the more His name was glorified.

In the same way we are ambassadors for Jesus Christ. The more refined we are the more God is glorified through the church. So, He takes us through the tests and the trials so that we will be refined in order to glorify Him.

This is also a means of preparation. Remember how our purpose here is to prepare ourselves to be the bride of Jesus Christ?

**Revelation 19:7**

*<sup>7</sup> Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

It is our responsibility to keep ourselves separated from sin so as not to be contaminated. Paul saw his teaching to the Corinthians as contributing to the purification of the saints.

**2 Corinthians 11:2**

*<sup>2</sup> For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

So, we are to do our part and as we do God also does His part through the tests and the trials. He is refining/purifying us for the day when we shall meet our Lord face to face.

**Colossians 1:20-22**

*<sup>20</sup> And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

*<sup>21</sup> And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled*

*<sup>22</sup> In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:*

So, just as Israel was tested so are we and it should not surprise us when the tests come into our lives. Notice the words of Morgan on how Israel handled this.

*"It may be that some of you are going through a certain trial or difficulty right now. It's going to turn out all right in the end, for God has promised that all things work together for good to those who love him. He intends to use this to strengthen your faith, your character, and your perseverance. But for right now, it's a mess. It's a test.*

*How did the Israelites do on their test? What grade did they make? They flunked. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. So, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"*

*It is a very natural reaction, and it's probably the very reaction I would have had. But the Lord is displeased with grumbling and murmuring because it betrays a lack of submissive trust in his guidance. In their book on burnout, the psychologists Minirth and Meier discuss this story in Exodus 15, and they define grumbling or murmuring as expressing "resentment, dissatisfaction, anger, or complaint in low or half-muted tones. Murmuring is*

*the opposite of unconditional obedience. It also stands in stark contrast to grateful trust." They go on to say that just as fever indicates the presence of infection, murmuring can show the underlying presence of bitterness in our lives.*

*It is a spiritual chain of several links: Difficulty and Disappointment lead to Anger and Bitterness and Grumbling.*

*How should we respond to adversity and affliction? Difficulty should produce Perseverance; that is, Patience and Trust in God's Presence, His Power, and His Promises. That's why the Lord was so very displeased with the people's complaints and murmurs. On the surface, a whispered complaint seems no big deal. But it actually reveals a response system that is going in completely the wrong direction."*

### III. The Remedy

**Notice Exodus 15:25 again.**

Let me just state that Moses did exactly as he should have here, and he took the matter to the Lord.

God then showed to Moses a tree and when it was cast into the water the waters became sweet.

**Notice Exodus 15:26**

Here in this verse God made a promise that if Israel walked in His will then He would keep them from the diseases which came upon the Egyptians. He then states that He is the God that healeth thee. This is the name, "Jehovah Rapha". Just as God healed the waters of Marah so he could heal the people of bitterness in their lives.

**Application:**

Let me start this application with a question for you, "Do you have a bitter pond in your life"? Maybe you need something that will make the bitter better, something that will heal bitter memories, something that will remove bitter attitudes from your heart. Let me tell you what it is that will bring healing for bitterness in your life, THE CROSS. If you have bitterness within your life, then I can assure you that God can heal that bitterness if you will only look closer at the cross and be reminded of what happened there. Let me ask a few more questions:

1. Do you have bitterness because you were treated unfairly?
2. Do you have bitterness because of difficult circumstances in your life?
3. Do you have bitterness that keeps you from giving forgiveness to someone else?

Let us now consider the cross.

It was because of what happened at the cross that we received the greatest forgiveness of all. It was our sins that nailed our Lord to the cross and it was there that He died to pay for our sins. It was our sins that caused Him to suffer and die. So, how could we ever withhold forgiveness after we have received the greatest forgiveness?

**Matthew 18:21-30**

*<sup>21</sup> Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?*

*<sup>22</sup> Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.*

*<sup>23</sup> Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.*

*<sup>24</sup> And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.*

*<sup>25</sup> But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.*

*<sup>26</sup> The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.*

*<sup>27</sup> Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.*

*<sup>28</sup> But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.*

*<sup>29</sup> And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.*

*<sup>30</sup> And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.*

If we become bitter because life is unfair let us just look at the scene around the cross and be reminded of what our Lord went through because of our sins and not His. If anyone was given a path that was unfair it was Jesus Christ. But He walked that path because of his love for us.

Sometimes it is God's will that we too walk a path that is unfair so that we may lead other to Jesus Christ as we submit to what God has given to us.

**Matthew 16:21-24**

<sup>21</sup> From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

<sup>22</sup> Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

<sup>23</sup> But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

<sup>24</sup> Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

**Conclusion:**

**Betty Botter**

Betty Botter had some butter,  
"But," she said, "this butter's bitter.  
If I bake this bitter butter,  
it would make my batter bitter.  
But a bit of better butter--  
that would make my batter better."

So, she bought a bit of butter,  
better than her bitter butter,  
and she baked it in her batter,  
and the batter was not bitter.  
So 'twas better Betty Botter  
bought a bit of better butter.

We need something that will make the bitter better, something that will heal bitter memories, something that will remove bitter attitudes from our hearts. It is the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like a tree thrown into a toxic pool, it transforms the waters of our lives in sweet, optimistic blessings. God can heal all bitterness for He is "Jehovah Rapha". He alone can make the waters of life sweet.