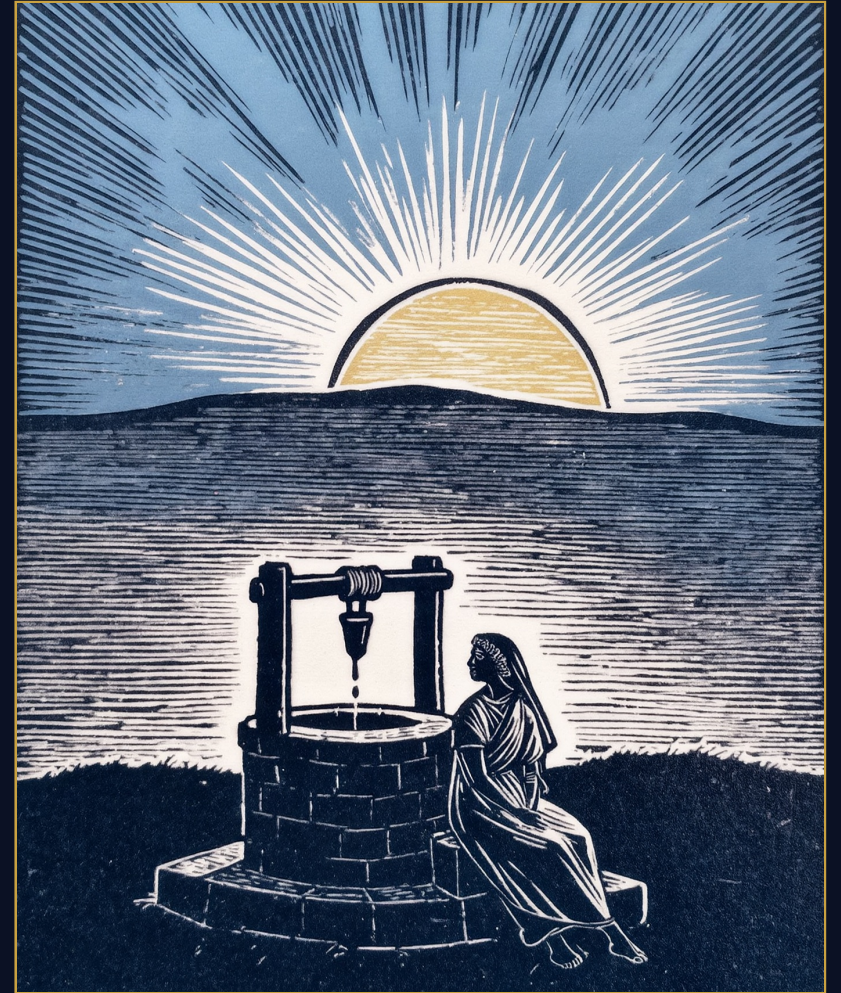


A SIX-WEEK SERIES

We Are Being Tested

What the Bible says about why we're here, for anyone who wonders.



WEEK 1

The Setup

The Bible reads like the record of a trial, and the one on trial is the whole human race, not one nation or one church.

Read: Foreword, Prologue: Twelve Jars, Three Readers, 1. The Sandbox, 2. The Rule, 3. The Mark · Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–9

The prologue says the water on Carmel was "removing a confound." Is reading a miracle as procedure a help to faith, or a threat to it?

WEEK 1 · TALK ABOUT IT

The book says the whole human race is on trial, not one nation or one church. Does that feel like good news or bad news to you, and why?

WEEK 2

The Trial of Job

The charge is the accuser's: that nothing we do is for nought, that every good thing people do is really wages.

Read: 4. Grace, 5. Job, 6. Admissible · Job 1:6–12

WEEK 2 · TALK ABOUT IT

Chapter 4 calls grace, given with nothing expected back, the one thing appetite can't produce. Can you remember a kindness done for you that no one else ever saw? What did it tell you about the giver?

WEEK 2 · TALK ABOUT IT

Job is never told the terms of his test. If you had been told the terms of a hard season in your life, would it have been the same test?

WEEK 3

Moriah

The answer to the charge is a substitute: the Son, who stood on both sides, paid the penalty himself, and rose.

Read: 7. First Positive, 8. Royal Priests, 9. Moriah, 10. Substitution · Genesis 22:1–14

WEEK 3 · TALK ABOUT IT

In Moriah, "the one sacrifice of a child that God commanded never happened." Does that help with Genesis 22, or does the command still stand in the way?

WEEK 3 · TALK ABOUT IT

Chapter 10 says the answer to the accuser's charge is a substitute: the Son, who paid the penalty himself, and rose. What changes when the one who set the terms is the one who pays?

WEEK 4

The Other Side

God showed overwhelming power early, and it produced fear, not trust, so he stepped back far enough to be refused.

Read: 11. The Other Side Runs a Test, 12. The Pharaoh Curse, 13. On the Job, 14. The Method · 2 Samuel 12:1–7

WEEK 4 · TALK ABOUT IT

The Pharaoh curse says people are judged by their own words. Have you ever pronounced a sentence on someone else and later found it described you?

WEEK 4 · TALK ABOUT IT

God showed overwhelming power early, and it produced fear, not trust. Why might trust need room to be refused?

WEEK 5

The Quiet Years

The record keeps its own damaging evidence, the way a court record would, and the rest of a fair test's method too: a control group, replication, witnesses, and honest uncertainty.

Read: 15. Ruth and Esther, 16. Jonah, 17. The Dissent, 18. The Seams, 19. The Terms on Our Side · Esther 4:13–14

God is never named in the Hebrew text of Esther. Where have you seen what looked like chance turn out to be something more?

WEEK 5 · TALK ABOUT IT

The book says the record keeps its own damaging evidence and states what would prove its reading wrong. Does a faith that invites testing feel stronger or weaker to you?

WEEK 6

God Sees Everything

What is placed in our keeping, we answer for, from a brother in a field to a patient at the end of life.

Read: 20. Daily Bread, 21. Within Reach, 22. Custodians, 23. Testament, 24. The Last Second, Epilogue: God Sees Everything · Luke 23:39–43; Genesis 16:13

Chapter 20 calls the manna a daily test of trust, and asks whether enough will be enough. What would "enough for today" look like in your life?

WEEK 6 · TALK ABOUT IT

“What is placed in our keeping, we answer for.” Who has been placed in your keeping this season?

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