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# THE SECRET TO EXAM SUCCESS

EXODUS 16:13-36



When I was at High School, the only time I learned anything was when my teacher set an exam. Unless it was tested, I never learned it. If it was tested, I had to learn it.

Regrettably, many of us bring the same minimalist spirit into our Christian lives. Unless we are tested, we don't learn. If we are tested, we have to learn. That was also true of the Israelites, which explains why in Exodus 16:13-36, God set Israel three tests that he still sets his people to this day.

- **GOD TESTS OUR TRUST IN HIM (13-21)**
- **GOD TESTS OUR REST IN HIM (22-30)**
- **GOD TESTS OUR MEMORY OF HIM (31-36)**

## LEARNING

### **GOD TESTS OUR TRUST IN HIM (13-21)**

Despite Israel's complaining, God provided both bread and quails for them. The bread was made out of manna and came with the condition that they only gather as much as they needed each day and leave nothing for the next day. This was to test whether Israel really trusted God to provide every day for their needs.

Of course, some distrusted God and attempted to keep some overnight. The result? **It bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them (20).**

**WHEN GOD CALLS US TO TRUST HARDER  
WHY DO WE DECIDE TO TRY HARDER?**

So Israel failed that test. Does God give them another chance? Yes, he tests their rest in him.

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## GOD TESTS OUR REST IN HIM (22-30)

The next test was whether Israel would rest in God. Although only allowed to gather one day's supply at a time, on the sixth day they were allowed to gather twice as much so that they would rest in God on the Sabbath day (22-26). God promised that in these circumstances the bread would not rot on the second day, and it didn't.

But, yes, you've guessed it, some decided to go out on the seventh day anyway to gather more and found none (27). This time the Lord was angry that they failed the test of rest (28-30).

WHEN GOD PROMISES REST,  
WHY DO WE CHOOSE RESTLESSNESS?

A second fail. Surely he doesn't give them a third chance. Yes, he does. He tests their memory of him.

## GOD TESTS OUR MEMORY OF HIM (31-36)

Knowing Israel's tendency to spiritual amnesia, God tests whether Israel will remember his provision. **Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the Lord to be kept throughout your generations"** (33).

In this case, we're not told the final result of this third test. We're told they ate the manna for forty years, but not whether they remembered it longer than that. We're left hanging, asking, "Will Israel pass the test of remembering this provision at the end of a forty-year lesson?" So far they've only taught us how to fail.

WHEN GOD TEACHES THE SAME LESSON FOR FORTY YEARS,  
HOW CAN WE FORGET THE LESSON IN 40 SECONDS.

LOVING

When I taught Seminary students, I often heard them complaining about professors just giving them "busy work." They felt they were tested just to be tested, rather than tested to help them learn. God never does that. When he tests our trust, our rest, and our memory, it's always necessary, always constructive, and always helpful. In some ways, the whole Christian life is a lifelong test of our trust in Christ, our rest in Christ, and our memory of Christ. But here's the encouraging secret to exam success. Christ is with us in the tests, wants us to pass the tests, and helps us to pass the tests.

LIVING

Whatever situation you are facing, pass God's tests by trusting, resting in, and remembering Jesus.

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