

Pass The Test

Sermon Title: **Pass The Test**

Sermon Number: **7103**

Speaker: **C. Elijah**

Link to sermon audio - <http://www.theonlineword.com/mp3/7103.mp3>

Link to sermon video - <http://theark.s3.amazonaws.com/vid/7103.mp4>



BrothersofTheWord.com

C. Elijah:

If you'd open your Bibles up tonight to the Book of Exodus. The Book of Exodus tonight, Chapter 16 and I really just want to read one verse there, don't intend on being long tonight. So, I just want to read one verse and then I'll let you go shortly. Exodus Chapter 16 and I like to read -- just read there verse 4. Here is the situation where the people of God, the children of Israel were murmuring and complaining after being delivered by Egypt and now they are complaining about food and so, God answered their cry and their complaints in verse 4.

Exodus Chapter 16 and Verse 4. So let's read verse 4 there in unison, ready? Let's read together. "Then said the Lord unto Moses, 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or not.'" Now that word where he says, "that I may prove them" that were prove is literally is the word the test in the Hebrew and so, he's really said, so that I could test them, so that I can test them. So I just want to use as a subject tonight, "Pass The Test." Pass The Test.

Turn to your neighbor and say "pass the test." Pass the test. Well, the Bible clearly teaches us that there are occasions where God tests his people. And he tests us for variety of reasons, to see if we will trust him, to see what were made out of, to see what's on the inside of your heart, He will test us to see what we do under pressure, to see if we really all that we claim to be, or if we are just full of a lot of hot air and sold(ph) upon the pressure and not much to our faith and not much resiliency on the inside of us.

But in this particular test, where God was testing for, this was a test of obedience. It was a test of obedience. Everybody say, obedience.

Crowd:

Obedience.

C. Elijah:

A test of obedience. So, God wanted to see if they would obey Him. He wanted to really see that when it bore down, if they would listen to Him. If they would carry up their heart into Him, if they would listen to His voice, if they would obey Him and so He gives them a test of obedience. And so, often God gives us a test of obedience, just to see if we will do what He is

requiring of us, if we will do what He's instructed us to do just to see if we are obedient.

Now, at this particular time, God really wanted to take His people to the promise land. He had a place prepared for them and He wanted them to go to this land that He had prepared, but before He could do that, He needed to know something. Before He could take him to the promise land, God needed to know something, He needed to know whether or not they would obey Him. Their obedience down the line will prove to be critical and so God wanted to find out upfront, "Will you obey me?"

So, He give this test of obedience. He wanted to take them to a promise land, but before they could go, God needed to find out if they would obey him. How many of you know that there are some greater places that God longed to take us in life? There are some greater places that God wants to -- I mean there are some destinies(ph) for us, there is a new level for us, there are some more things that God wants us to achieve and enjoy and higher heights to reach. God has some places that He wants us to enjoy and to get to and to reach our destinies. He has prepared different places for us in life. But how many of you know that before God can take us to these places that He prepared that He wants us to enjoy that God needs to test our obedience as well.

00:05:06

So, God hadn't changed. He hadn't changed. Before He would take that people to the promise land, He had to test them to see if they would obey. And God hadn't changed. He's the same -- still operating the same today. And before God will take us to new level and to a different places of destiny, the places of promise, places of fulfillment, God needs to test us to see if we are ready before we can go.

And so, we are talking about pass the test. Turn to your neighbor and say, "pass the test." God tests our obedience. He tests our obedience to see if we would listen to His voice, to see if we would obey him. God knows that our future successes and failures are really based upon our obedience to Him. He knew that Israel's future would be based upon their obedience. God knew the enemies that they would have to face and they would have been eaten alive if they were disobedient to God. And so

God knew that. He knew what the challenges that were before them and He knew that their obedience would be vital to their success and if they were disobedient, God knew they would be wiped out by the enemies and the challenges that laid before them and the same as to with us today, God knows what's before. He knows the challenges and God wants us prepared to go to certain level. God won't allow you to go, He won't take you until you are ready. There are a lot of opportunities that have come our way even here at this church and the pastor has refused to go there because he said we're still not ready there. We are not ready yet to go. And so, our progress, there are so wonderful places that we can (00:07:10) and go to right now, but we are not ready to go. And that's why God has to make sure were ready. God didn't want to take unprepared people to a prepared place. You got to be ready. You can't just stumble in the heaven, you got to be up heaven as a prepared place for a prepared people. And the promise of God is a prepared place for a prepared people. So, God wants us ready. We don't want to be the same and He won't let us go unprepared. So, God will so often test us to see how we are progressing, to see if were ready, to see if the stuff is in it, to see if we are matured enough, to see if we would obey His voice.

And so, here in Israel's history, He decided to test their obedience and He knew it was vital that they would obey him. And so He had to test them upfront because God knew later on they would have to fight some battles. And they would have to fight battle simply based on their obedience. I mean, their victory, whether they would win or lose would be based solely on their obedience to God. God knew that there would be battles where God would just tell them to think. He would just say, now this battle you are getting into fight, you are not going really fight and I just want you to think. And that was found strange wouldn't it?

If you are army and your commander-in-chief just tells you to sing(ph). But God knew that those are going to be tough and He would just say, put the praises upfront, put the singles upfront, I don't want you to fight this battle, I want you to just sing. Now see, it was going to take obedience for them to operate on that. God knew that was in the -- He knew that was coming, He knew there will be battles where God will use just His wisdom. He will use strategy straight out of the man to God and He would just simply say, I want you to sing in this fight. That's why I

want you to do is sing, put the praises upfront and just sing. Let the praising go ahead of the army. I just want you to sing in this war.

There would be other battles where God would tell them, just take a trumpet and some lamps(ph), and I want you to--you are going to fight a hundred times of people with trumpets and lamp. Then found too much of a military strategy does it, but God knew that they would have to trust Him, they would have to obey Him in order for it to work.

00:10:00

And so God knew that He was going to have some weird strategies in the future. I mean, it would be weird to them because they wouldn't understand what God was doing and the plan of God, and so God knew that in order for them to be successful and victorious that their obedience was the absolute necessity, absolutely necessary for them to be walking in full obedience. God knew that there was coming a time when He would tell them to walk. I mean this is one of the great military conquest over the land of Canaan. He would just tell them to walk quietly around the wild fortresses for a week.

God had some very interesting military strategies within it. I just want you to walk quietly, don't say a word, circle the cities for seven days. God knew that in order for victory to be won, their obedience would be at outmost important and so it is in our lives, God knows that in order for us to go to the places where He desires for us to go and enjoy the things in life that He designed for us to enjoy, to reach our land of promise, to do things beyond our wildest dreams and imaginations, to walk in the fulfillment of his promises, is going to require absolute obedience.

So, God will test just to see where we stand, just to see what were made out of, just to see that we would trust them to obey Him. Even when it didn't make any sense, then looked like in a logical sense at all. I mean, can you imagine if you were the king and you got the army together and you'll say, alright it's 300 of us, we got to go to fight a 132,000 people. Now, all we got to take our trumpets and lamp, I mean that's literally that's what the command--that's what He had to tell the truth. All we got to take our trumpets and lamp. We got to whip a 132,000

mean soldiers, we'll go with trumpets and lamp because that's what God said. Notice the obedience, the degree of obedience that they would be required to walking.

And so God knew that coming. So God wanted to test them early on. So before, they were in a major battles or major challenges, I want you to see what God did. You know what God did here in Exodus Chapter 16, Verse 4, He tested them in a very small matter. He didn't wait so they would face in battle to prove their obedience. He tested them in a very small matter. I mean, God took a little insignificant matter such as food. This food, how they would eat it, how they would gather it, how much of it, to test their obedience, to see if they would obey.

Now, God here in verse 4. Let's read verse 4 again, Exodus 16. I want you to see, He's going to test them in a simple God designed this test. Now, the people had complained to God about food. They had complained about food and God could have simply rain the manna down like He did and He could have simply said, alright you all help yourselves, go ahead and enjoy yourselves, get as much as your heart till your heart is content, go ahead and I mean just enjoy yourselves, there is plenty for everybody. The windows of heaven are open and I'm raining(ph) out the manna. Go ahead and dig in. But you know that's not what God did.

God gave them instructions on how to gather this food, how they eat it, when they it, when not to eat it. He gave an instruction and God says, I'm doing this Moses for a reason, I'm not just doing it to be doing it. I'm doing it as a test. I want to test them in something little because if they won't obey me in the small matter of food, how will they obey me when it's time for them to fight giants?

00:15:05

And God says, well go ahead and get this test at the way early, so I can prove to know whether or not they'll obey me. So, God gave--He basically gave him three instructions concerning this food. He rain the manna down but He gave Moses three instructions for the people. And number one, He said simply, "Only gather enough food for one day, one day." Only gather enough food for one day. Can you imagine if God told you to do that, only get enough food for one day. You went to the grocery

store and you buy just enough bologna sandwich, and that's basically what it is. He's only gathering enough for one day, one day. That was His first instruction, gather enough food for one day.

Now, that was hard because I mean food manna was everywhere. Manna was everywhere. They could have gathered as much as they want it, but they have a limit, they could only get what they would need for one day and the amounts would vary because you had some bigger families and some smaller families. For the smaller families, they'll need as much as the bigger families. The bigger families will need more than the small. So everybody had different proportions but the instruction was, only get enough for one day, not enough for three days, not enough for the rest of the week, not enough for two days, not enough for two families. He said, get enough for one family for one day.

So that was the first instruction He gave, only get--and noticed in their verse, where He says--look at verse 4. "Then said the lord unto Moses, 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate each day.'" Notice that. That certain rate is simply is the portion just a day's portion of manna, that's all they could get. So, go out each day and only get enough of that day. A certain rate, notice that. God said, I want you to get a certain amount. And then He says, "That I may test them, whether or not they will walk in my life," God said I'm doing this for a test. Turn to your neighbor and say, pass the test. Pass the test. And God said, I'm setting up a test here. God says, I'm setting up a very simple test, nothing hard. I mean you can get them more basic. He said, don't tell him, how much food to get?

Now, the second command, He told them. He said, don't leave any of it overnight. So, when you get your daily portion, make sure you consume it all that day, don't leave any leftover, don't put any outside and then hold it. I mean, if you don't eat it all throw it out or whatever but don't keep any overnight. The second command He gave him. Don't keep any overnight. Get enough for one day, don't keep any overnight.

The third command He gave him was simply, don't gather any on the Sabbath day. On the Sabbath day, don't gather any. So therefore on the sixth day of the week, you get enough for two

days' supply because you will not gather on the Sabbath day. He gave him three simple instructions as a test of their obedience. You think they pass the test? Can't get it any simpler, all He said, get enough for your family for one day, don't leave any overnight and don't work on Sunday or the Sabbath which is Saturday night, whatever you all want to call it.

That's what He said. Get enough for one day, don't leave any overnight and don't work on the Sabbath. That's it, simple enough. You all think they cared enough? You think they cared enough? Let's look at 2 verse flip over same chapter, Exodus 16. Look at Verse 19 and Verse 20. Exodus Chapter 16, Verse 19 and Verse 20. "And Moses said, 'Let no man leave of it till the morning.'" So this is the second command, He is talking about don't leave any overnight. Look at Verse 20, "Notwithstanding they hearkened" or they didn't listen and do. "Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was angry with them."

00:20:04

They did not follow instructions. God gave them three simple instructions to test them. Number one, only get enough for one day; number two, don't let it stay overnight and number three; don't work on the Sabbath. That's it. That's all I ask. Do that. And how many of you know there was some knuckleheads that just refuse to do right (00:20:26) I don't wait from nothing, it just not going to do right. I don't care how suffer you make it as long as there'll be some--people just not going to do right. Sure enough, some people kept some overnight and it bread worms and decayed and so forth. Moses was angry. So, God used a simple test in a very small matter. So, this was a matter of life and death. It is very simple, I mean it really didn't make any difference. The people were hungry and God wanted to feed them, so, they could've gone out and gotten as much and ate as much and--but God put instructions which address to test to see if they would do what I asked them to do.

He tested them in a very small matter. And so, what I began to see is, the small things do matter. You know we love(ph) in the saying, don't sweat the small stuff. Now, that's true over on one side, but when you get over on the side of obedience to God, you

better sweat the small stuff. The small stuff is very important. The small stuff is very important. So, God will test us with small things. It doesn't give you a major test first. God will test you with something that you would think is insignificant, something very small, an area where you don't really pay that much attention where it doesn't mean that God will test in a very small way in small matter, something that's insignificant. God will test just to see where your obedience is.

You know our pastor, he does that all the time. He stood up and he just ask simple things. He simply say, I want all the couples to go out of the church today holding hands. You know half of them are not going to go out holding hands. Some of them go out hugging. Some of them are going to go out locked elbows. He said, I want the couples to go out holding hands. Simple, just simple. Turn to your neighbor and say, God tests us in the small stuff. The small stuff is very, very important when it comes to our obedience to God. And I'll tell you this, before God will ever give you something big, He'll first give you the opportunity to be proven with something small. Everybody want something big. God give me the job, big assignment. I want to go to China and minister. I want to go to -- and bring down the walls in Russia. I want to go inspect(ph) the gospel around the world. God where do you want me to go? Send me God. I'll go. What did you want me to do? I'll do it.

You know God is not going to give you anything big like that to do. You know what's God is going to say? Go next door and minister to grumpy Mr. Jones. Sometimes, He won't even tell you to go next door. He'll find someone in your own house. See, God--He works small. He'll start very small. He will give us some so insignificant, so small, we almost don't even recognize but what God is doing, God said, I want to give them something just to test to see if they would do what I ask them do in a very small matter. In a very small matter. See, God couldn't deal with Israel about fighting giants if they wouldn't eat bread right?

They fail the first test. And the same people that fail their first test, guess what? Those were the same people that disobeyed God when he said it's time to take Canaan now. Let's go. They disobeyed Him but they were same people that disobeyed their first test. They disobeyed God in a small test and guess what?

They disobeyed Him in the big one. So, God will test us in small things before He ever give us anything big.

00:25:08

You know the Bible says, about elders or ministers in the church, it says, before you leave the church make sure you held(ph) your own family at home well. You see how God test us with small thing? He said, wait a minute before you're qualified to go lead a thousand people, how about you lead the four people under your roof at home well first? See, God tests us in small things first. Small things first, that's the requirement. Pastor Nathaniel, he couldn't pass at this church if Puddin was not happy.

You know in his first test is at home. His first test is at home. God is not going beat him over the head above high in the church. God is going to first test him at home. Is your own wife happy? What good is it to have a big successful church and your wife is sitting on the front real mad. Yeah, you know, you take care your home first. And a lot of people have gotten a lot of preachers that have gotten mixed up. They thought they probably get a church first and their own home is in shambles(ph). No, take a leave of absence on the ministry and go home and get that straight pass the first test. Then come back.

God tests us in small things. For Jesus said it this way over in Luke 16. You don't have to turn that. Luke 16 Verse 10. He puts it this way same thing God did in Exodus that we just read about Exodus 16:4 but Jesus said in Luke 16:10, "He who is faithful in a very little thing is also faithful in much." Turn to your neighbor and say, "Obey God in the little things." Obey God in the little things. I really found out the little things matter to God. Little things are important to God when there's God telling you to do something no matter how small, how insignificant, how unnoticeable it may seem. Little things matter to God because God is always looking for opportunities to test our obedience to Him and He will start with little things to see how we handle little things. God will test us with little things.

I read an interesting story about a young man and he was actually a front desk clerk at a hotel. And he was on the

nightshift at this particular hotel. Not a large hotel but he was running the front desk on the nightshift. And this couple came in. This is a true story I read. This couple came in and it was really late at night probably around midnight. They came in and the requested a room. And the young man that was on night duty, he said, "I am so sorry. We are booked up. There are no rooms available here." He said, in fact, basically the whole city is booked up because I believe there was some major convention there or something. He said, you're not going to find a room anywhere. He said, I am so sorry. You know there's nothing I can do. We were booked. And the man and his wife, they looked at each other and they turned back towards the exit door as to go back out of the hotel and then it was pouring down raining and they were here to back out into the rain. And the clerk saw them. He said wait a minute. He said, wait a minute. He said, come back--come back-- come back. He said, I tell you what, he said, I have a room here in this hotel. Give me about 10 minutes and I'll get it cleaned up and you all take my room. And sure enough, he got it cleaned up and the couple used his room and after the next day when the couple was checking and they saw the young man, the husband, the gentleman said to him, he said, "Son, what you did, I'll never forget it. Son, one day, I'm going to build a great grand hotel.

00:30:00

And he said, "Son, one day, I'm going to build a great grand hotel." And he said, "Because of this act of kindness you've shown on us, I want you to manage that hotel for us." And the man left, he and his wife left and the young man, he didn't think any more of it because that's a man dream. You know, that's a man who is just blowing off his dream there. About two or three years later, that young clerk at the hotel received a letter. In the letter with two airline tickets and the letter read, "Young man, you may not remember me, but my wife and I were in your hotel, two or three years ago and we didn't have a room and we were headed back out in the rain and you stopped us and gave us your room." And he said, "I told you when I left that I was going to build a grand hotel one day and I wanted you to come and manage it for me." And he said, "Son, I've enclosed you two tickets for you to come and I have a hotel and I want you to be my manager." Guess what the name of that hotel was? The Waldorf Astoria, one of the grandest hotel in the world. That young man became the general manager of that hotel because he

passed a test in something small, just a small act of kindness, just something that he didn't think much of, but that small act of kindness.

And Jesus said it this way, you're faithful. He was faithful when he was the night clerk at the little hotel. His faithfulness in little promoted him to be ruler over much and that young man became outstanding general manager because the man that owned the hotel knew that if this young man was excellent in the small things of customer service, the way he took care of me and my wife, he will also be excellent in general manager and so, this principle is universal. I mean, it's a principle out of the kingdom of God, but it's worldwide, it's universal. It works on business. It is a universal. When somebody is faithful in little, they'll be faithful in much and when God can trust us in little things, God can trust us in big things and He'll never give us anything big until we've been faithful in something small and I just received that you know, it's important to obey God in the little things, little thing. I mean little things, little things, some very little things. Now, God is sometimes just drop in your heart little things.

I heard Gloria Copeland. She said that when she first got started and she was first learning God and she was first learning to hear from God, she said God began to speak with her about little things in her life. Not major things, not major, little things. He didn't speak with her about the worldwide ministry they would have one day and the millions of people around the world. He dealt with little things. She said in fact the first time she heard from God, she says, she had just read the Bible and she was just sitting there quietly, trying to hear something from God because she wanted to open the communication lines and wanted to learn how to hear from God, how dialogue with God and enjoy God's presence, so she just sat there quietly and she said, she heard something that said, "Your car light is on." And she said, "Oh," she said, "That can't be anything, that's too insignificant, too little." She said she sat there quietly a few more moments, heard the same thing, "Your car light is on." She says she just blew it off and she kept hearing the same thing over and over. She says she finally got up and went to the garage and guess what? Her car light was on and it just overwhelmed her to know that God would speak to her about something that little, about the car, but God knew that if a car light has stayed on, her battery would have been dead, she

would have been standing there with this and her children. God took care of any little thing, but He tested her just to prove His voice to her, to teach her His voice in little things and God will speak to you about little things, just little things, but we have to learn to obey Him in the little things.

00:35:05

God will sometimes nudge your heart to help somebody, just a little thing, give him \$5. I had an opportunity a couple of weeks ago, somebody needed help and I felt the Lord saying to me, "Go ahead and be gracious to him, just a little. Give him a few dollars." Just a little thing and I was conscious because at first I wasn't going to do it, but then I realized, I said, wait a minute, God has been gracious to me, and I will obey Him in the little thing and I'm learning now to obey God in the little things, in the little things. There's so many little things where God will speak to your heart where He will direct you, little things. To be faithful in little things.

Sometimes we get tempted to tell little, those what we called a little white lies, but in God, they're not little white lies. So, such thing is a little lie. God gave you an opportunity. God tested your obedience in a small matter, in other words, you lied about it. I don't care how little you want to call it. You lied. The phone rang, tell them I'm not home. You are home, why are you going sit there and lie. Just have the bone as to go to the phone and say, "Excuse me, I can't talk right now, because I don't want to talk." Don't lie. I mean there's no little thing, those little thing. You see our life is made up of a lot of little things. The direction of your life is made up of a lot of little things. You may be able to pass the hourglass there, just little grains of sand hitting one at a time. Little things, so I mean, be careful for little things. Little white lies. No need to lie, tell the truth. Just pick up the phone and say, "No, I don't have your money right now. I don't know when I'll have it, but I'm working on it." There's no need you lying about it.

See, that builds integrity and what God said, God said, "Now, I can trust them because they're obeying me in little things." Now, so often we say to God, "God, I want to you give you all of me." All God asked for through the pastor was three minutes a day. Little, some little. You all notice that? The pastor didn't tell us to spend two hours a day with God. He said three

minutes a day. “God, I want to be with you all day long. God I wanted to marinate in your presence and I just want to be with you all day.” Pastor sat up here first of you, he said God told him at the church spend three minutes a day. Little. Notice how little it was. God said, I want to test them in the little things. Don’t worry about trying to spend two hours a day with God. Three minutes, three minutes. Little, little. We say to God, “God, everything I have is yours.” All God says is give me 10% of it. God just want a little. He just want a little. He tests us in a little thing just to see if you will obey Him in the little things, in the little things.

You’ll be surprised a lot of -- there are a lot of little instructions in the Bible. That a little things from the word. The Bible tells us not to worry, something little. The Bible says don’t be angry, don’t go to bed angry. Little. I mean not lot of little things that can sometime sneak in and cause (00:39:00) and God deals with us about little things and so He wants us to keep our hearts open to Him and be willing to obey Him in little things. A lot of times God will drop somebody in your heart and say, I want you to call them. See, it’s little. We’re blowing it off because God is trying to get you to touch somebody else and you never called.

A lot of times, I’ve had people come here to the church and they want to really want to get involved in ministry, I found out that they hadn’t spoken to their mother in years. God said, “Wait a minute before they get involved in the ministry, tell them to call their mother. Reconcile with them.” Little things, little. Turn to your neighbor and say, “God tests us in little things. God tests us in little things.” Little things, little things, little things and I’ll tell you this, God will never give you anything else until you have obeyed Him in the first thing He gave you.

00:40:01

He’s not going to give, He’s not going to reveal anything else to you, He’s not going to give you anything else until you do the little thing that He told you to do already. Little things, little things. I mean a lot of times when God told you to do something and you haven’t done it. That’s saying of conviction, you’re trying to pray and you’re trying to receive it, but you’re not going to get anything from God, you’re wasting your time because until you go back and obey God in what He’d already

told you to do, you're wasting your time trying to go further. Little.

God wants us to obey Him in little things, little things. God will move on your heart and when God moves on your heart to direct us and give us His instructions, He tests our obedience just through little things, little things, little things, just a little things and I just want you to be cognizant of that and be aware and be sensitive in your heart to little leadings of the Lord. Little things that God will bring to you. Little places of obedience where we've missed it. Just little things. Things that we think are insignificant. God speaks to us in the little things.

Just as insignificant, didn't make any sense for those people to only gather enough manna for one day. Didn't make any sense at all, didn't make any sense at all. Why not go ahead and put enough manna in your house to last you a week. You only had to go out once a week then. Didn't make any sense at all to have to go out there every day and just get one day supply of manna. Didn't make any sense, but God will simply say, I want to test your obedience, something very simple, something really little. Praise God. Praise God. Praise God. Something little. Little things. Just a little thing. Little things.