

# JEHOVAH-RAPHA: The God Who Heals

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**Text:** Exodus 15:26

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**Series:** Drawing Near to God through His Name  
Wednesday night Prayer Meeting

**Introduction:** Open your Bibles to Exodus 15.

## *Context*

God's people had just been delivered from slavery in Egypt. They sing, probably for a whole day, and then God brings them to a test – a trial – a very difficult passage way of life. He brings them there to teach them and us that life is more than having a good time. It's not about our comfort. It's about our conformity to Christ! It is about God truly healing us of all our diseases and restoring our soul in Christ.

**Principle:** Enduring adversity in life is part of being made whole as a person. If you are born again, God is crafting you as His new creation. You are being made new in Christ.

In life we come to some very difficult and confusing situations. We should thank God for every one of them. We should have great hope in God that His purpose is to bring glory to Himself through us. We show our hope in God through our trust and obedience to God.

**Exodus 15:20–27** (ESV) — “20 Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. 21 And Miriam sang to them: “Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.””

22 Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and **found no water**. 23 When they came to **Marah**, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah.

24 And the people **grumbled** against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” 25 And he **cried to the LORD**, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became **sweet**.

There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and **there he tested them**, 26 saying, “If you will **diligently listen** to the voice of the LORD your God, **and do that which is right in his eyes**, and give ear to his commandments and **keep** all his statutes, I will put none of the **diseases** on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am **the LORD, your healer**.” 27 Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the water.”

## I. We see three common Places in the believer's life (vs. 22-23, 27).

God brings the Israelites to three places –

1. A *thirsty* desert – there are times of *suffering*. vs. 22-25
2. A *bitter* pond – there are times of *confusion*. vs. 26
3. A *fertile* paradise – there are times of *refreshment*. vs. 27

A. We need to expect that life will often be a roller coaster. But the one constant in our life is the firm foundation of the Lord!

**John 10:28**, Jesus says of believers: “they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

The Christian life is much the same. When we are delivered from sin in this world, we also are brought down many *uncertain* and *confusing* pathways. Sometimes there are *dry* places in life. Sometimes there are bitter places, and other times there are *fertile*, *refreshing* places in life. But we can never be brought too high or too low by our circumstances. We must have the Lord as our constant and we must find our contentment in Him.

The Christian life is all about growth! Like a flower pushes its way up through the dirt, sometimes there are rocks, and sometimes there is good soil. The power of life pushes us through!

There are many circumstances in life. Circumstances change. God never changes.

B. God is in control of every circumstance of the Christian's life.

Each place is a test for Israel of old. **Verse 25**, “and there he tested them”.

God was sovereign in the life of His people of old, and He's sovereign in your life if you know Christ. *Nothing happens without His permission*. Like with Job, even when Satan wants to try us, He has to ask for permission.

You are deeply loved by God, so when you come to the *thirsty desert*. It's God's desire that you learn realized that **God is in total control!** God is testing you there. He is growing your faith.

God also tests all believers today.

- Peter (**1 Pt. 4:12**) tells us we should “not be surprised at the fiery trial” of our faith, “as though something strange were happening to you”, but we are to “rejoice” because we are sharing in and being conformed to “Christ's sufferings”.
- He says in **1 Peter 4:19**, “Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.”

C. Trials are appointed by God to grow us to be like Christ.

Will you trust God in the difficult and confusing times of your life?

- Remember that *disappointments* are God's *appointments* to grow to be like Christ.
- Every *extremity* is an *opportunity* to see God's mighty acts take place. The children of Israel had just seen God open up the Red Sea, but now they are already complaining and murmuring.

#### D. Trials are good!

You are struggling right now with an impossible, confusing circumstance and you say, WHY Lord, why?

- Trials reveal the sinfulness still in our hearts. David says in **Psalm 119:67**, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word." Again in **Psalm 119:71**, "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes." Sometimes we don't know the areas in life we are failing in until we are squeezed.
- Trials reveal the faithfulness and goodness of God. **Lamentations 3:22–23** (KJV), "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." In the trials, God not only wants to show what's in *you*, but also what's in *Him!* In our failures, we see God's mercy. In our weakness, we see His strength. In our sins and wickedness we see God's love and long suffering patience.  
We do not deserve the Lord's goodness, but His justice. When we are pressed, we get to see God's miracles and deliverance and His love for us on display! We get to see that "His grace is sufficient" and that He will "supply all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus".
- The wilderness of trials make us long for our true home in heaven with God. When awful days come along, we groan.

**2 Corinthians 5:1–5** (ESV) — "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, 3 if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee."

Trials make us groan. When we feel the pain and weariness of our earthly bodies, the Spirit of God says, "Heaven's coming! Jesus is coming! It won't be too much longer". And we long for heaven. We say, "Come quickly Lord Jesus".

## II. We see two Responses to God's tests in the Christian Life (vs. 24-25).

**Verses 22-25**, "22 Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went **three days** in the wilderness and **found no water.**"

What an awful circumstance. Three day with no water. Babies are crying. Adults are exhausted!

23 When they came to **Marah**, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. 24 And the people **grumbled** against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” 25 And he [Moses] **cried to the LORD**, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became **sweet**.”

We see two responses to God’s test:

**Verse 24**, “the people grumbled”, but

**Verse 25**, “Moses cried to the Lord”.

Let’s not make this as if these are the most carnal people. With all our comforts, I can’t imagine any of us acting any differently.

- We complain when our air condition or our car goes out.
- We complain when circumstances are difficult or trials come.
- We complain about our children, our job, our spouse, our health...

Are there grumbings and discontentment and unbelief still in us? We still have hearts that struggle with unbelief.

- **Philippians 2:14**, “Do all things without murmurings and disputings”
- **1 Thessalonians 5:18**, “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
- **Psalms 84:11**, “...the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.”

1. God wants us to “cry out” to Him and draw near to Him in our trials, and God will make our trials sweet!

**Verses 24-25**, “24 And the people **grumbled** against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” 25 And he **cried to the LORD**, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became **sweet**.”

2. The wood points us to the Cross. It could literally be translated “tree”. In fact in the Septuagint, this word is translated *xulon*, or “tree”. Moses threw a “tree” into the water. Our trials become sweet when they push us to Jesus.

**1 Peter 2:24**, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.”

All Christians are on a path of Christlikeness to the very end of life, because they turn to Christ and get better instead of bitter!

### III. We see one Purpose for the difficulties and tests in our lives: God wants to restore and heal us! (vs. 26).

The purpose of God looks like it is in question here at Marah.

**Verses 25-26**, “There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, 26 saying, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer.”

There’s our name of God: “Jehovah – Rapha”! Remember, God is our HEALER! He wants not to destroy us to be restore us!

A. God who redeems us has every right to **govern** us (vs. 26a). What does God tells us?

- (1) Listen (*diligently listen*), in private, from the pulpit, in public
- (2) Obey (*do what is right in God’s eyes* – public and private)
- (3) Seek truth (*give ear to His commandments*)
- (4) Treasure God’s Word, hiding it in your heart (*Keep all His statutes*).

God freely redeems His people from Egypt, and then tells them to obey. It is important to realize that nothing had been told to God’s people while they were in Egypt about keeping the LORD’s “statutes and commandments”. But now that they were redeemed, God was to govern them! God’s claims are upon them.

Always remember that GRACE is not LAWLESSNESS. Grace works in us to love God and to keep His commandments. We love His ways. We want His will and His kingdom. We love the heart of God. Those who hate to keep His commandments also hate the heart of God.

B. God who redeems us will **heal** us (vs. 26b).

**Verse 26b**, “I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer.”

God poured His wrath on Egypt in the form of diseases. It was a form of judgment. The word “HEALER” here, “Rapha” in Heb., signifies a restoration of both body and soul.

Sin has consequences. There is sickness and anxiety and fear. That wouldn’t exist without our choice to sin.

**Healing in the Bible is often synonymous with salvation.**

Think of the promises of healing God gives us.

- **Psalm 103:3** (ESV) — “who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases”.

- **Isaiah 53:5-6**, “But he was wounded for our **transgressions**; he was crushed for our **iniquities**; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are **healed**. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

What healing does God promise? It is a healing from the curse of sin. It is because of the curse of sin that we all suffer with sickness and pain. But because we are redeemed in Christ, God is “Jehovah – Rapha” to us! He is the LORD our healer.

We will not receive the plagues of the Egyptians. We will not destroy us, but instead restore us! When Christ comes again, “mortality will put on immortality and corruption will put on incorruption”. Death will be swallowed up in victory!

**Conclusion:** The Lord is our healer. God’s purpose is our restoration now as we are conformed to Christ’s image and in the future as we one day are fully redeemed and healed of every anxiety, every discomfort, every pain, all because the Lord is gracious and merciful!

**Romans 8:28–29** (ESV) — “And we know that for those who love God **all things work together for good**, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also **predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”

**Psalm 23:1-3**, “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. 3 He **restores** my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.”

God has delivered us from sin and death in order that we might know His presence and power and purpose!

God’s purpose: maturity – restoration to Christ’s image

**James 1:2–4** (ESV) — “Count it all **joy**, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be **perfect and complete**, lacking in nothing.”

QUIT COMPLAINING AND DRAW NEAR TO THE SWEETNESS OF JEHOVAH RAPHA, the LORD our Healer! He satisfies. He restores us to everything we lost when we fell into sin.