

**Judges**  
**Time of Testing: Othniel**  
**Judges 2:16-3:11**  
**Sermon Outline**

**Introduction:** The lingering Canaanites were for Israel a test as to “whether they would take care to walk in the way of the Lord.” We will consider (i) the experience of testing and (ii) the character of the divine “Tester.”

**I) The experience of testing**

**A) Israel’s experience**

**B) Our experience**

**C) The test grade**

- For Israel: “F”
- For us

**II) The divine “Tester”**

**A) Anger**

**B) Faithfulness**

**C) Pity**

**III) The haunting question: Is this going to go on forever?**

**Conclusion/Take Away**

### Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Testing is a regular part of spiritual experience (see Romans 5, 1 Peter 1, James 1, Hebrews 12). Why does God test us? Recall a testing experience in your life: What happened? What if anything did you learn?
- 2) What did God use to test his people in Judges 2 and 3? What was the test designed to reveal? How did Israel do (see 2:17-20)?
- 3) What was the problem with Israel's cries for deliverance? Have you ever behaved that way?
- 4) Fighting temptation can be described as sailing up wind as opposed to simply letting the wind take you in whichever direction it happens to be blowing. Identify at least two winds of testing that are blowing strongly in your life. What are you doing to sail against them?
- 5) The character of the "Tester" shines in sharp contrast to that of those he tests. He is "angry" (2:20, 3:8), faithful, and full of pity (2:18).
- 6) What problems do you have, if any, with God being angry? Why?
- 7) God is not a 'helicopter parent' (see 2:21 and 3:2), hovering over his children and immediately swooping in to keep them from foolish decisions and to deliver them from unhappiness. Why does he not do this? Are your parents helicopter parents? Are you one? What evidence do you have for your answers?
- 8) God's Messiah ('deliverer'—the same word used to describe Othniel) delivers us from the depressing cycle we find in *Judges* (apostasy, misery, cry for help, deliverance). How does he do this? Spent some time thanking him for his work.
- 9) What will you do this week to push against the prevailing wind?