

# Exodus 17:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

## Analysis

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**And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses**—Physical thirst produces spiritual complaint. The verb 'murmured' (לֹעַן, lun) appears again (cf. Ex 16:2), showing Israel's default response to hardship. Their accusation that Moses brought them from Egypt 'to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst' reveals staggering unbelief: they interpret every trial as murderous intent. This projecting of evil motives onto God's servants (and thereby onto God) demonstrates how unbelief breeds paranoia. The thirst is real, but the interpretation—that God/Moses intends their death—is blasphemous. Christ also faced false accusations that He worked by Beelzebub (Matt 12:24), showing that unbelief interprets divine works as demonic.

## Historical Context

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The Sinai wilderness is extremely arid. Without supernatural provision, no large group could survive. Israel's thirst was genuine crisis, making their need legitimate but their response faithless.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does unbelief interpret God's testing as God's attempt to destroy us?
2. What does accusing leaders of murderous intent reveal about the murmurer's heart toward God?

## Interlinear Text

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עָלָיו	בָּשָׂר	בָּשָׂר	לְקַרְבָּן	לְקַרְבָּן	וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק	עָלָיו
<b>thirsted</b>	H8033	<b>And the people</b>		<b>there for water</b>		<b>murmured</b>	<b>And the people</b>
H6770		H5971		H4325		H3885	H5921
מִשְׁאָה	לְמִשְׁאָה	זֶה	לְמִשְׁאָה	זֶה	בְּאָלִילָה	בְּאָלִילָה	
<b>against Moses</b>	<b>and said</b>	H4100	H2088	<b>Wherefore is this that thou hast brought</b>		H5927	
H4872	H559						
וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק	וְיִצְחַק
<b>us up out of Egypt</b>	<b>to kill</b>	H853	H853	<b>us and our children</b>		H853	
H4714	H4191						
מִלְּבָד	בְּאָלִילָה	בְּאָלִילָה	בְּאָלִילָה	בְּאָלִילָה	בְּאָלִילָה	בְּאָלִילָה	בְּאָלִילָה
<b>and our cattle</b>	<b>with thirst</b>						
H4735	H6772						

## Additional Cross-References

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**Exodus 15:24** (References Moses): And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?