
TASTING GOD — AND BEING TESTED BY HIM

A Theological Reflection with Biblical Foundations

The Lord says:

Psalm 34:8 (LUT)

„Schmecket und sehet, wie freundlich der HERR ist; wohl dem, der auf ihn trauet!“

(Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who trusts in Him.)

The invitation to “taste and see that the LORD is good” is not merely poetic language — the Hebrew words טַעַם (ta’am — to taste/experience) and רָאָה (ra’ah — to see/perceive) point to active, experiential knowledge of God. This is not intellectual assent or abstract belief, but a personal encounter with God’s goodness that transforms the soul.

1. Theological Meaning of “Taste and See”

In Scripture, *tasting* God does not mean literal eating but rather experiencing God’s goodness personally and intimately. Just as tasting food gives sensory confirmation of its sweetness, so experiencing God’s presence and providence confirms His character to the believer.

A careful theological reading shows:

- *Taste* implies participation and experience — a real encounter with God’s character and presence.
- *See* implies spiritual perception and discernment — seeing beyond the surface into the reality of God’s goodness.
- Both together form a biblical pattern of knowing God experientially before fully understanding Him.

In Christian theology, this aligns with the concept of experiential knowledge (gnosis) — where faith becomes *relational and transformative*, not just informational.

2. God Tests to Reveal True Faith

As your original message explains, God often *tests* people to reveal the depth of their trust. The example of the Israelites in the desert shows this clearly. After crossing the Red Sea God led them into the wilderness where there was no water for three days. This was not arbitrary — it was a test to reveal whether their faith was rooted in the comfort of provision or in God Himself (*the ultimate Provider*).

In Exodus 15:22-25 (EÜ) we read:

„...und sie gingen drei Tage in die Wüste und fanden kein Wasser... Da murrte das Volk gegen Mose... Mose rief zum HERRN; da zeigte der HERR ihm einen Baum, den er hineinwarf ins Wasser, und das Wasser wurde süß... Dort prüfte er sie.“

(...and they went three days in the desert and found no water... The people complained... Moses cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree... There He tested them.)

This testing is not punitive — it is formative, designed so that genuine faith may arise where there was only conditional trust.

3. Theological Pattern: Test Before Blessing

In biblical theology, God's blessings often come *after* testing. This theme appears repeatedly:

Deuteronomy 8:1-3 (LUT)

„Du sollst dir merken alle Wege, die der HERR, dein Gott, dich geführt hat... und erprüft hat dich, um zu wissen, was in deinem Herzen ist, ob du halten würdest sein Gebot oder nicht...”

(...He tested you to know what was in your heart... to humble you and let you know your dependence on Him.)

This passage shows that God allows testing to shape true dependence on Him rather than mere reliance on blessings or comfort.

4. Christ as the Fulfillment of “Taste and See”

Psalm 34’s invitation finds its ultimate fulfillment in Christ:

Johannes 6:35 (LUT)

„...Ich bin das Brot des Lebens. Wer zu mir kommt, wird nicht hungern...”

Jesus invites us to partake of Him — to *taste* and *see* the goodness of God through relationship with Him. This aligns with the Old Testament invitation: tasting God’s goodness becomes partaking in the life of Christ.

5. Experiential Faith — Not Mere Intellectual Belief

Christian theologians distinguish between:

- Docetic faith — belief based on doctrine only

- Relational faith — belief grounded in personal experience of God's presence

Psalm 34:8 calls believers to the second: faith that is tested, proven, real — involving heart, mind, emotion, and obedience.

Practical Theological Implications

1. Testing Reveals True Faith — trials are not signs of abandonment but opportunities to discover whether our trust is in *God Himself* or merely in His gifts.
2. Taste Before Full Sight — in the biblical order, *experience* comes before *full understanding*, not vice versa. Spiritual knowledge grows as we encounter God.
3. Christ as the True Goodness — Jesus is the ultimate answer to the invitation to “taste and see” — not just a symbol, but the incarnate presence of God's goodness.

The call to *Taste and see that the LORD is good* is both an invitation and a challenge. It invites us into deeper communion with God through personal experience and spiritual perception. It challenges us through seasons of testing so that faith can be proven genuine.

May this understanding deepen both your relationship with God and your theological reflection on what it means to trust Him.

Shalom.

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