



“Open Church – Open Bible”

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Sunday Church School

September 20, 2020

“God Gives Victory Over the Amalekites”— Exodus 17:8-16

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“Exodus 17:8-16”

⁸Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

⁹And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand."

¹⁰So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

¹¹And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

¹²But Moses' hands *became* heavy; so they took a stone and put *it* under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hûr (khood) supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

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“Exodus 17:8-16”

¹³ So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this *for* a memorial in the book and recount *it* in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-Is-My-Banner;

¹⁶ for he said, "Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation."

Last weeks lesson brought Israel to the encampment at Rephidim, a station between **wilderness of Sin** and the **wilderness of Sinai**

- This being the site of the second water contention (1st **Shûr**– *wall; that beholds*)

Numbers 33:11-16 details the stops:

- from the **Red Sea** (*yam sûp*) and camped in the Wilderness of **Zin** (*sîn-crag*)
- from the Wilderness of Sin and camped at **Dophka** (*dopqâ – drover; cattle driving*)

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“Exodus 17:8-16”

¹³ from Dophkah and camped at **Alush** (*‘ālûsh –aw-loosh – desolation*)

- from Alush and camped at **Rephidim** (*beds; places of rest; supports*)

 - ❖ **Num. 33:14** “where there was no water”

- from Rephidim and camped in the Wilderness of **Sinai** (*sînay– thorny; devoted to sin*)

While the Israelites were still encamped at Rephidim, which was now an oasis in the desert (V 1-7), they encountered a new threat to their survival: “Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel.”

The Amalekites, who were descended from Abraham through Esau (Gen 36:15), were a nomadic or seminomadic people who inhabited the general region of the Negev and the Sinai during the second half of the second millennium B.C.

- We can’t forget there was an ongoing feud between the lineage of Jacob and Esau [Gen. 32-33]; who had connection to Canaan through his wives (Gen. 36:2)

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We must realize that Israel’s experience with the power of Yahweh was, for the most part a shared experience.

- They had been living in Egypt for 400 years (Gen. 15:13-16)

It’s important to remember— Moses gave Israel **the law** (Torah), but Abraham gave Israel **her God** (*Yahweh is the God of Abraham not the God of Moses -- Gen. 24:12, 24, 27, 42, 48*)

While in struggles, it is hard to comprehend the “benefit of battles,” but there are valuable lessons being taught by every battle.

a) Israel battle #1 The Red sea which required them seeing God’s salvation

b) Israel battle #2 The brackish water at Marah followed by Springs at Elim

c) Israel battle #3 The hunger faced in the plain-- relieved by manna & quail

This week is battle #4 and from this battle we have the illustration of how dependent we are on the Lord to achieve anything.

- Prayer is the means by which we express that dependence and seek His help.

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I. A GREAT BATTLE—Ex. 17:8-13

- Some time probably elapsed from the water provision before they were exposed to this new evil.
- This presumption is based on the altered spirit of complaining that animated the people with the lack of water.
- The miracles of the manna and the water from the rock produced a deep impression and permanent conviction that God was indeed among them
- Whenever God’s people experience His Divine Presence and provision, it calms them and encourages them – making them more resolute
- The language of “fought with Israel”— implies that no occasion had been furnished for this attack; but, as descendants of Esau, the Amalekites entertained a deep-seated grudge against them
- It is almost certain their disdain is connected with **Israel’s prosperity** and marvelous deliverance experience; showing that the blessing contained in the birthright (Gen. 25) was taking effect.

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I. A GREAT BATTLE—Ex. 17:8-13

- It seems to have been a mean, insidious surprise attack on the rear where the aged and infirmed would be located (Num. 24:20; De 25:17)
- It was also an impious defiance of God Who brought delivered Israel
- In V 9, Moses said to Joshua “Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek
- This is the first Biblical mention of this young warrior who was destined to act a prominent part in the history of Israel.
- The Amalekites were a nomadic tribe, making an irregular attack on a multitude probably not trained for such warfare.
- V 10 indicates that Moses war plan was not based on the prowess of the Israeli soldiers, but moreover on the power of God.
- Listen as he says V 9b “tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.”
 - ❖ From the beginning this rod of God would prove God’s presence (Exd. 4:2)

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I. A GREAT BATTLE—Ex. 17:8-13

- **Exd. 4:17** The rod would serve to help Moses perform signs
- **Exd. 7:9** The rod was cast before Pharaoh; becoming a serpent eating their serpents
- **Exd. 14:16** The rod was stretched out to open the Red Sea
- **Exd. 17:10** Moses went up on a hill, held up his hand; and with the wonder-working rod; he acted as the standard bearer and intercessor of Israel
- In his prayer, he would seek God for success and the earnestness of his feelings would be contrasted to the feebleness of his nature.
- In going up to the hill, he took **Aaron and Hûr** (khour), whom Jewish tradition says was the husband of Miriam (*Caleb would also have a grandson named Hûr*)
- The holding up of the hands is applied to praise, however, Egyptians uplifted arms of Pharaoh to bring protection; as well as to signal the times of attack.
- Therefore, the raising of the hands could have been **signals** to Joshua as to when he should deploy the various divisions in battle.
- When he was unable to relay divine guidance through the signals, the Israelites were not able to succeed. – so Aaron and Hûr assisted him in his command.

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II. DIVINE DECLARATION—Ex. 17:14-16

- **Exd. 17:13** So Joshua **discomfited** (*hālāsh*= *overthrow; weakened*) Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.
- The flesh will never be destroyed or “eradicating” in this life; Christ will give us new bodies when He returns (Phil. 3:21).
- In I Sam. 15 we will see that Saul’s sin was in refusing to deal completely with the Amalekites; and II Sam. 1:6–10 informs us that it was one of the Amalekites Saul spared that killed him!
 - ❖ Rom. 13:14 “Make no provision for the flesh”
- A long battle was decided in favor of Israel, and the glory of the victory, by an act of national piety, was ascribed to God
 - ❖ **I John 5:4** “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.
- In V 14 God told Moses to write a memorial to this day for Israel’s history

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Jehovah-Nissi means “The Lord our banner.” We have our victory not through our own efforts but through Christ alone (John 16:33; 1 John 2:13–14; 5:4–5).

The text says Moses built an altar (v 15) and he named the altar **Jehovahnissi** (*God is my banner or standard*).

- This name reflects the theology of Yahweh as the leader of the armies of Israel.
- An **altar(mizbēah)** is structure on which offerings are made to a deity; coming from a root word which means to slaughter

In the Egyptian army, the divisions were named for various gods (e.g., the division of Amun, division of Seth) and the “standards” would identify the division by means of some representation of the god.

- I know we ascribe this as a name of God, but it was the name of an altar
 - ☐ **Gen 22:14** Abraham called the name of that place **Jehovah-jireh**
 - ☐ **Gen 33:20** Jacob he erected there an altar, and called it **El-elohe-Israel**
 - ☐ **Gen 35:7** Jacob built there an altar, and called the place **El-beth-el**
 - ☐ **Judges 6:24** Gideon built an altar and called it **Jehovahshalom**
 - ☐ **Ezek. 48:35** The name of the city was called **Jehovahshāmmâ**



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“LESSONS FORM THE LESSON”



How did Israel overcome the enemy? They had an intercessor on the mountain and a commander in the valley! Moses' role on the mountain illustrates the intercessory work of Christ, and Joshua with his sword illustrates the Spirit of God using the Word of God against the enemy (Heb. 4:12 and Eph. 6:17–18).

Of course, Moses is an imperfect picture of Christ and His intercessory work, since our Lord never wearies and needs no assistance (Heb. 4:16; 9:24). Yet Paul says that believers can “help together by prayer” (II Cor. 1:11), which is what Aaron and Hur did.

Moses had the rod of God in his hand, which speaks of God's almighty power. Moses had defeated every enemy in Egypt, just as Christ has overcome the world in mighty victory.



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“LESSONS FROM THE LESSON”



It is important that God’s people cooperate with God in gaining victory over the flesh. Romans 6 tells us to reckon and to yield, and by faith to put to death the deeds of the body.

Moses alone on the mount could not win the battle, nor could Joshua alone on the battlefield: victory required both of them.

How wonderful that we have the interceding Son of God who is for us (Rom. 8:34), and the indwelling Spirit of God who is for us (Rom. 8:26), plus the inspired Word of God in our hearts!



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“ADVANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE”



1. Who were the Amalekites, and what did they do? What tactics did they employ in their attack against Israel?
2. With what task was Joshua charged? What made his task especially difficult? What role did Moses play in the battle?
3. What did Moses' staff, the “rod of God,” symbolize (Ex. 17:9)? How did Aaron and Hur assist Moses?
4. What judgment did the Lord pronounce on the Amalekites and why? (See Psl. 83:4)

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TODAY'S AIM

Facts: to see that God actively delivers His people.

Principle: to know that while the methods we use may change, we need God's leading to handle our present problems.

Application: to make sure that, like Moses and Joshua, we are depending on God's help in facing present opposition.

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