

Lessons from Exodus 10 01-07-01

Well here we are after the Holidays back in Exodus. Remember the Lord sent us here through the Apostle Paul to learn God's warnings and examples in their experiences. We left off in Exodus 17 verse 8.

⁸ The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim.⁹ Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands."¹⁰ So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.¹¹ As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning.¹² When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up--one on one side, one on the other--so that his hands remained steady till sunset.¹³ So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."¹⁵ Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner.¹⁶ He said, "For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD. The LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation." Exodus 17:8-16 (NIV)

The Israelites are at Rephidim – a resting place – where water came out of the Rock to satisfy their need. God tested the Israelites but they turned around and tested God. The big lesson here was that we are not to do that, we are to walk by faith and not sight. They asked, "Is the Lord among us or not?" And after all they had seen they knew He was, the real question is, "Is He going to give us what we want when we want it – or not?" God supplied their need but warned them that man does not test God, God tests people.

Apparently on the way to Rephidim the Children of Israel had grow very weary and the weaker folk lagged behind. The Amalekites picked off these stragglers in their weak condition. Deuteronomy 25:17-19 The Amalekites had no fear of God. That is a terrible statement. When one has no fear of God they have no fear of sin. You can all relate to someone you have known who sins blatantly against God and his fellow man and sleeps like a baby. They do not fear the justice of God, and have no concern in regards to his holiness. To fear the wrath of God is the beginning of turning from our own way. "By the fear of God men depart from evil." The grace of God moves our heart to recognize the holiness of God and the wickedness of our hearts by contrast. We repent and turn and will not go that way again. We have a fear of God.

The Amalekite were an ancient nomadic people. (1Sam 27:8) They were the first to go to war with Israel outside of Egypt. Why would they do that? The Israelites were shepherds like the Amalekites. They probably wanted the herds which to them meant wealth. They may have seen some of the wealth of Egypt that the people had taken. In a word the reason was greed. They wanted what Israel had. They would fight to possess it. If you have stepped out of the world and into the Kingdom of God it won't be long before you are in a battle with the flesh. At first you don't know what to do because you never fought before. But the Holy Spirit will teach you how to wage war on Amalek- your old greedy nature.

These who have no fear of God are ruthless. Nothing bothers them. It reminds us of some of the evil war criminals. Nothing was gruesome enough to shock them. That is the heart that has no fear of God. That is the Amalekite. That is the old nature of man. Our worst enemy is within.

They picked off Israel's weaker people and then attacked the camp. God had Moses go up to a hill overlooking the battle. The staff of God very well may have been ornamented, like a banner, the word also means 'shining'. It represented God with them, his power amongst them. As Moses held that staff or banner high the armies under Joshua would prevail. But as Moses arms grew tired and he would lower it. Then the Amalekites would begin to push back the Israelite army. Now - I'm sure Moses would have liked a swift victory but God does not always work that way. Sometimes we have so much to learn an easy answer will not help us as much. God will bring the answer at the right time. As the battle dragged on Moses gets very tired. Aaron and Hur pull up a stone for him to sit on and they help hold his arms up, and the Children of Israel prevail against the Amalekites.

You probably have experienced a battle when you just felt you couldn't go on. The battles of this day with sword and shield often were a match of endurance. Whoever turns and runs is defeated. If you can keep your shield up and keep swinging you can hang on. What kind of shield do you carry? FAITH! And what kind of sword? The SWORD of the SPIRIT! And the fiery darts just keep coming and the enemy just keeps swinging too. Don't many of your battles mirror this old type of warfare?

Some people say, "Oh, you just need to rely on Jesus more." Well Moses was relying on the LORD, but his body was weary. And why do you think God allowed that? Why did God not invest in him supernatural strength to do the will of God? Because God was showing us and the nation of Israel something. We need each other's help. God wants us to work together and support each other, just like part of our body can compensate and assist another part. If my right hand can't pull it my left helps out. If they can't my legs and back get into the

action. So sometimes we just can't do it and we need an Aaron or a Hur to come along side and hold our arms up till this battle is done.

We have a few people in this fellowship right now getting tired. Will you be an Aaron or a Hur to them and come along side and help them pray through to the end. Encourage them with your presence, with your support. If they can't pray, – pray for them, for their need.

The battle, down there, does not just affect Moses or any individual soldier, it affects the nation. You see, when you help a brother or sister you help the Kingdom of God. It affects you and everyone else. Ol' Amalek won't be satisfied until he has conquered all of us and so we must stand together as one man. The flesh fights against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. We may not see the connection between the fall of a brother down there on the battlefield and Moses and his tired arms right here beside us, but there certainly is. When one part of the body suffers, we all suffer with it.

This last verse of the passage sounds to me like Moses had his hands lifted in prayer. How else do your hands reach the Throne of God except in prayer? So not only can we be there physically, fighting at our brother's side, but we can intercede for them as Moses was.

Moses turns out to be one of the great intercessors of the Bible. He is always in prayer for the people asking God to have mercy on them and spare them. Here he is asking for victory in battle. We certainly need to pray for our spiritual family in the battle. Prayer is more powerful than we can imagine. If we ask anything in his name, according to his will, He will do it. That is real power against Amalek!

And yet the battle rages on. You see the answers don't always come before we get tired. They are often raging when we don't think we can go on. God is stretching us and showing us that we need our family to help us. If you hesitate to call on a brother or sister you are not just hurting yourself but them. If Amalek overruns you guess who is next on their list. So don't think, "Oh I can do it, I have Jesus, I don't want to bother my brother or sister." What would have happened to Moses had he not taken Aaron and Hur up there? Or what if he refused their help? Most of us are willing to give help but we also need to be willing to receive help and realize we are giving the rest of the body a chance to serve. We are helping them by letting them help us. Don't be so proud you can't go to the family of God for help. Other people will suffer when you hang on to that independent attitude.

Moses prayed through to the victory. The Lord declares he will obliterate Amalek! Yeehaw that means the old nature is going bye bye! (1Sam 15:3) It is

doomed. When we see Him we will be like Him for we shall see Him as He is!
(1Jn 3:2)

God has revealed himself in a new way to Moses and Israel. Jehovahnissi - The Lord is my banner. When I am in a battle I look up to the Lord over me and know it will be OK. I fight not for greed, not for a government of men, but for the King of kings. Look – He is my banner. See him over you in the midst of battle and know that even if the battle is long and tough, you will win. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. James 5:8 (NIV) You are fighting for the winning side. Banner also means victory. He is our victory. What He did for us brings victory.

The Song of Songs says his banner over me is Love. I look up in the midst of the battle and see love glistening overhead and know – this battle is for my good. He will see me through, He will send brothers and sisters – his body to support me and surround me, He will uphold me with his right hand. He will never let me go. His banner over me is love.

Israel will cross Amalek's path again several times. Only when they are disobedient to a direct command of God does God allow them to be defeated by Amalek. When they tried to enter the Promised Land after they whined to Moses about the giants, it was Amalek that met them and defeated them. So it is with your sin nature, it is waiting for a defiant decision against what you know is of God so it can rush in and destroy you. Be obedient to God in all you know He has shown you and the battle may be long and you may grow weary but you will come out with the Victory banner overhead, the banner of love.

Is He your Jehovah Nissi? Is He the first place you look when the battle begins? And as you fight on do you keep taking glances up to see his banner over you? And then as you lift your hands to heaven in prayer and become weary, do you let your brothers and sisters assist you?