

## Support in the Battle

Exodus 17:8 – 15

### I. Intro

- A. Continuing study of Exodus; God, through His chosen deliverer Moses, delivering His people from Egyptian captivity
- B. Performed miracle of parting the sea so the people could cross over and escape pursuit of Pharaoh and Egyptian army
- C. Last week, people been gone from Egypt about a month, in the Wilderness of Zin (Sin); ever since they've left grumbling and complaining – first, no water in Marah, and God works through Moses to make the bitter waters of Marah sweet/drinkable provides 12 springs of water and trees for shade; second, complaining about no food, more complaints from anticipation instead of actual experience, God provides quail and manna from heaven, ultimately seeing in that Jesus Christ who said “I am the bread from heaven”
- D. Chapter 17 today, people start complaining again about having no water; God instructs Moses to strike a rock with the staff in his hand, and water comes from the rock
- E. Passage today, God's people are under surprise attack by Amalekites; remember when people first fled Egypt, God took them on a route that was out of the way to prevent them from getting mixed up in any battle/conflict – but, God knew what His people would face eventually (because God is omniscient – knows everything) and didn't leave the people unprepared; Exodus 13:18 (ESV)  
18 But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt **equipped for battle.** - God didn't let them flee Egypt unprepared in any way
- F. In Chapter 14, just before parting the waters and crossing the Red Sea God assured Moses and the people several times – *The Lord will fight for you*
- G. **READ Exodus 17:8 – 15**
- H. See three parts of this account – crisis, prayer (prevailing, continuous, persistent) of Moses and the leadership, and the results

### II. The Crisis

- A. Obviously, know this has been struggle for God's people, in the wilderness, having to totally completely depend on the Lord for everything – basic necessities, food and water, protection while on their journey

- B. God's people haven't dealt well with their situation – now, enemy people, unprovoked, “ambush” them
- C. Background on Amalekites – Amalek, grandson of Esau, twin brother of Jacob; they were “cousin” people (know the story of Jacob and Esau); Amalekites would be a constant burden/threat to Israel for many years after this
- D. Description of how Amalekites attacked here: Deuteronomy 25:17-18 (ESV)  
 17 “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you came out of Egypt,  
 18 how he attacked you on the way when you were faint and weary, and cut off your tail, those who were lagging behind you, and he did not fear God. ; as people were traveling in the wilderness, the ones normally in the back of the pack - women, children, elderly, weaker/slower moving ones of the group – that's where Amalek attacked
- E. Remember, the Lord has promised He will fight for His people; even in all the people's lack of trust in God and their grumbling and complaining, the Lord does not abandon them
- F. Moses, God's chosen leader for His people, knows what has to be done; appoints Joshua to lead the people in battle (first time Joshua mentioned); Moses, Aaron (Moses' brother, God's appointed High Priest), and Hur (Moses' brother-in-law) go to *top of the hill* (v. 9) to oversee and direct/lead from a higher vantage point, and most important – to pray
- G. **POINT 1:** Whenever faced with any kind of crisis, the first thing any godly leader (any godly man or woman) would do is pray – not just a 2/3 minute, “Help me God” prayer, but prevailing/continuous/persistent pleading in prayer; it's non-stop praying until the crisis situation is under control
- H. The next point

### III. Prevailing Prayer

- A. (v. 11 – 13) One of the most powerful accounts of intercessory prayer in scripture
- B. Moses wasn't directly leading/fighting with the people in this battle, but he was leading/fighting in a more important way – praying for the people and Joshua; the fate of the people absolutely was dependent on trust and faith in God, but praying was just as important – trust and faith in God during trials (all the time) and prayer go “hand in hand”
- C. Not only was Moses praying, but he had, literally, prayer support from his leadership partners
- D. (v. 9) Notice how Moses refers to the staff in he carries - ... *the staff of God*; staff carried often represented in Biblical times numerous things: leadership and authority, power or extra strength, protection – meant all

these things for Moses but for him it wasn't his leadership and authority, his power or strength, Moses being the protector or protectee – it was all about God's leadership, power and strength, and God's protection for His people

- E. As God's people are engaged in this battle against and much stronger Amalekite people, as Moses raises his staff in prayer to the Lord, God's people prevail; as Moses becomes tired, staff becomes heavier to hold up, and his arms are lowered the Amalekites prevail
- F. Then, see what a great example of partnership in leadership; when Moses' arms become tired from holding up the staff, Aaron and Hur find a stone for Moses to sit on and rest his body, and they both get on either side of Moses and each take an arm and help Moses hold it up
  - i. **REFER v. 12, 13**
- G. **POINT 2:** Whenever we feel under attack, whether it's overcoming sin and temptation, mistreatment/persecution of some kind, prejudice, hatred, loneliness, emptiness, or illness our hope is in our Lord and confidence that He is fighting for us (**v. 15**), but yet we still must immediately turn to Him in prevailing, continuous, persistent, pleading prayer for however long it takes
- H. **1 Chronicles 16:11 (ESV)**  
11 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!
- I. **Matthew 7:7 (ESV)**  
7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. ; *knock* – not gentle tapping, but idea of banging, beating, pounding
- J. **Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)**  
18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all **perseverance**, **making supplication for all the saints**, (praying for, and with, our brothers/sisters in Christ)
- K. If there's a time when the church (people of God) are facing crisis and need to be before God in prevailing/continuous/persistent/pleading prayer that time is right now

#### IV. **Result**

- A. **Know the result – God's people were victorious in battle**
- B. **Think about result through asking few questions:**
  - i. **1** – Impact on the people seeing their leadership come together, knowing how the leadership desperately prayed for them and Joshua?
  - ii. **2** – What example was set for the people by their leadership?
  - iii. **3** – More importantly, what kind of testimony to God did the leadership show to the people?

iv. **4** – How did this impact the lives of Moses, Aaron, and Hur – and the partnership they shared in leading God’s people?

C. **POINT 3**: Lesson is clear from this passage: when crisis, difficulties come, God’s people must go before the Lord in prevailing prayer, become intercessors for one another, cry out to God, seek after God, continuously appeal to God, and finally trust God

D. **Psalm 61:1-3 (ESV): David’s prayer**

1 Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer;

2 from the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I,

3 for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy.