

## Winning The War Against Satan

Text : **Exodus 17: 8-16 ; Deut. 25:17-19**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

#### **A. Establishing the context :**

1. Israel has recently been rescued from Egypt by God. ( **No effort on their part** )
2. When Egypt pursued Israel, God destroyed their army.  
**Exod. 14: 13-14** "... stand still and see the deliverance of ..."
3. God gave them food in the wilderness.
4. As our story begins, God has just provided a river of water in the desert.

#### **B. At this point, God was caring for them like helpless little child.**

1. They had never before functioned as a nation. ( **naive and ignorant** )
2. Hundreds of years of subjugation resulted in them having a slave mentality.
3. Thus, God was taking them the long way around to avoid the Philistines.
  - a. Philistines were a strong nation. ( **chief rival of Egypt** )
  - b. God did not want Israel to be frightened and run back to Egypt.  
**Exod. 13: 17-** Now when Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, "*The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.*"
4. However, eventually all children must grow up and stand alone.

#### **C. The Amalekites attacked Israel.**

**Note :** *Who were these "Amalekites ?"*

- *They lived in the land south of the Negev. ( southwest Canaan )*
  - *They were descendants of Esau from his grandson. ( Gen. 36: 12 )*
1. For Israel, this was not a battle of choice.
    - a. It was an unprovoked attack.
    - b. The bible does not give a reason so speculation is fruitless.
  2. Via Moses, God instructed the Israelites to fight to save themselves.
    - a. This is the first battle Israel fought as a nation.
    - b. This is where Joshua is first introduced. ( **Name means : Jehovah Saves** )
  3. Though Israel was required to fight, God helped them. ( **held their bicycle up** )
    - a. God works His will through His people.
    - b. Moses was placed high so Israel could see the connection of victory to God.
    - c. This is the first time the tribe of Judah ( *Hur* ) took leadership. ( **cf- 24:14 & 31:2** )

**TRANSITION :****Why is this story important to us ?**

1. It's important to us for the same reason God did not want Israel to forget it.
  - a. Vs. 14 .. God commanded Moses to **“Write this in the book.”**
  - b. This is the first time Moses is referred to as writing a book. ( **wrote first 5** )
2. **God** also does not want for us to forget these things.
  - a. **I Cor. 10:11- Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**
  - b. Observe the context of I Corinthians 10 ... events in the wilderness.
3. The O.T. stories :
  - a. Teach us about God, about faith and about how to live a life pleasing to God.
 

**Rom. 15:4- For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.**
  - b. The events of the O.T. are “types” and “shadows” of the Christians struggle.

**I. Once liberated from Sin, the Christians should not be surprised when attacked.**

- A. When one leaves Satan's domain, Satan will try to retrieve what he lost.
  1. As a result, Christians are involved in an ongoing spiritual war.
  2. **Read ... Eph. 6: 10-20**
  3. The war is spiritual in nature, but it is fought in the flesh and Satan uses people.
- B. Satan attacks us in the same way he ( *using the Amalekites* ) attacked Israel.
  1. **Unprovoked** : The Amalekites attacked Israel simple because they weren't Amalekites.
    - a. Satan attacks Christians just because we are not ungodly. ( **war is w/ our Lord** )

**ILL- Remember the honor student who was killed because he wasn't in a gang.**

    - b. Like the Amalekites, Satan attacks because he is evil ... **it is his nature.**
      - 1) **Deut. 25: 18** ( *text* ) **The Amalekites “... did not fear God.”**
      - 2) Satan has always wanted to destroy God's people ... just because they are His.
      - 3) **John 3: 20-** ... **everyone who does evil hates the Light** ...
  2. Satan uses the same **method** as the Amalekites. ( **He attacks weakness.** )
    - a. **Deut. 25: 18-** ... **he met you along the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; ...**

- b. Like a beast of prey .. Satan **still** attacks the weak and the fainthearted.
  - \* *Remember Jesus in the wilderness at the end of His fast.* ( **Matt. 4** )
- c. When one is isolated from the church, Satan attacks.
- 3. Ready or not .. Satan strikes without warning. ( **element of surprise** )
  - a. Israel was not yet a fully functioning nation. ( **Just a mass of slaves.** )
  - b. Satan strikes before new Christians can develop spiritual wisdom.
  - c. When mature Christian feels safe, Satan strikes. ( **Cf- I Cor. 10:12** )

## II. God's attitude toward the Amalekites teaches us about His view of sin.

### A. God declared war on the Amalekites. ( *God hates sin.* )

1. **Exodus 17:16-** and he said, "The Lord has sworn; the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation."
2. God is willing to forgive, but he never forgets. ( To God, all time is now. )
  - a. Men expect others to "*Let by-gones be by gone.*"
  - b. We have a statute of limitation on most crimes except capitol crimes, e.g., murder.
  - c. With God .. ALL sin is a capitol crime. ( **Rom. 6: 23** , **Eph. 2:1** )

### B. God ordered Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites.

1. **Read ... I Sam. 15: 1-3 , 9**
2. Vs. **2** This was a punishment for the offense committed hundreds of years before.
3. Vs. **9** Saul did not complete his instructions.

### C. When men sin, the consequences are eternal.

1. Just as the sins of the Amalekites are written in a book, ours are as well.
  - Rev. 20: 12-** And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.
2. Jude warns us in Vs. **14-15** that ALL ungodly deeds will be recompensed.
3. They can be forgiven in Christ, but they will never be forgotten.

### D. We must understand the nature of our spiritual battle.

1. It is NOT just about striving to maintain purity of doctrine.
  - ( **Being faithful to the doctrine of Christ is just the beginning !** )
2. Our battle is to maintain our faith, our trust in God and our love for Him.

3. Though ours is a spiritual war, the battles are fought in the flesh.
  - a. Satan cannot touch our spirit so he attacks the weaknesses of our flesh.  
**James 1: 14- But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.**
    - \* *WHY are 39% of Americans obese ? They are ruled by their flesh.*
  - b. Spiritual warfare requires that we gain mastery over our flesh. ( Cf.- **I Cor. 9:27** )  
**Col. 3: 5- Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. *Deny the flesh's demands.***
  - c. Satan uses the world to appeal to our flesh.  
**I John 2: 15-16 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**
    - \* **We must overcome all three of our enemies : Satan, our flesh, the world.**

### III. The war we fight will never end so long as we are on the battlefield .. our flesh.

- A. The Amalekites remained the enemy of Israel.
  1. When Israel tried to take the promised land without God's blessing, it was the Amalekites along with the Canaanites who stopped them. **Num. 14: 39-45**
  2. Ironically, it was an Amalekite who killed Saul. **II Sam 1: 1-16**
  3. In Esther, Haman, the villain who wanted to kill all Jews was an Amalekite. **Esth. 3:1**
- B. The Amalekites are a type of sin, wickedness, and the flesh.
  1. Like the Amalekites, sin is always there seeking opportunity to destroy.
  2. So long as we live, we can never declare victory over the flesh. ( **keep on fighting** )
    - a. **Mark 14:38** ... Even when the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.
    - b. **Rom. 7: 14f & Gal. 2** ... The inspired Apostles struggled against the flesh.
  3. As with Israel, Satan will drive us back if we proceed without God's assistance.
  4. Overconfidence will bring us down as surely as the lack of faith.  
**I Cor. 10:12- Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.**
  5. Peter's warning is just as applicable to the modern Christian as in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.  
**I Pet. 5: 8- Be of sober spirit, be on the alert ...**

#### IV. It is vitally important that we stay connected with God and with each other.

- A. Aaron and Hur were just as responsible for the victory as were the soldiers.**
1. When the hands of Moses lowered the enemy began pushing back Israel's soldiers.
  2. Moses could not stand alone.
    - a. He was 80 years old.
    - b. Try holding a broom above your head. How long can you do it ? All day ???
- B. Every Christian needs others to hold up his hands in the battle.**
1. The lifting up of hands refers to prayer.
 

**I Tim. 2: 8-** Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.
  2. The victory came from God, not the physical act of holding up hands.
    - a. **I Pet. 4: 11-** ... ; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, ...
    - b. Those who stand in the spiritual battle receive strength from the Lord.
 

**Eph. 6: 10-** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.
  3. **For Hur to lift up the hands of Moses was a simple physical act, but it saved the lives of many. YOU CAN ALSO DO SMALL THINGS.**
- C. Your prayers can provide strength to others from afar. (*friends, missionaries* )**
1. We should follow the example of the evangelist, Epaphras.
 

**Col. 2:12-** ... always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.
  2. By inspiration, Paul recognized his prayer partners as part of his success.
 

**II Cor. 1:11-** you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many.

#### CONCLUSION :

- A. Israel's journey through the wilderness is a type Christians' journey through life.
- B. As the Amalekites tried to keep Israel out of the promised land, Satan continually battles against us trying to keep us out of Heaven.
- C. As Aaron & Hur lifted up the hands of Moses, so each one of us must support others.

#### INVITATION :