

WHILE THEY ARE YET SPEAKING

ISAIAH 65:24 & EXODUS 17

Text: Isa 65:24

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²⁴ *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

Introduction:

The need of the hour is powerful, persistent, passionate, prevailing prayer. The need is far greater than most of God's people realize. . The moral fiber of our nation has crumbled. Real love and compassion have become almost non-existent. Confusion and upheaval have swept across this country like a tidal wave. Even the so-called religious community is showing alarming signs of spiritual uncertainty.

If ever Christians needed to learn to prevail in prayer, it is now.

Remember this: "When prayer fails, Satan prevails."

Satan knows well that prayerless Christians are powerless Christians.

If we are to prevail, we must fight the good fight of faith; we must pray.

Read Exodus 17:8-16

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⁸ Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. ⁹ And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. ¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹² But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. ¹³ And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. ¹⁴ And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. ¹⁵ And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi: ¹⁶ For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Prevailing prayer among God's people is essential because of:

1. THE CONFLICT OF PREVAILING PRAYER

A. The Attack of the Enemy

1. Amalek's attack was calculated

Exodus 17:8

⁸Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

Deuteronomy 25:17-18

¹⁷Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; ¹⁸How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

Amalek attacked Israel from the rear, rather than make a frontal assault. This was no doubt an attempt to catch the Israelites off guard.

2. Amalek's attack was cowardly

Deuteronomy 25:18

¹⁸ How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

The Amalekites struck Israel at their weakest point. The infirmed, sickly and elderly were traveling at the rear since they were slower.

The devil loves to attack us in those weak and unguarded areas of our lives. Therefore, we must remain spiritually alert.

The apostle Peter tells us, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:” (1 Pet.5: 8).

We are also warned by Paul, who said, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor.10: 12).

Often it is those areas of our lives where we feel we are strongest that is most vulnerable to Satan’s attack, because we don’t think we have anything to worry about in those areas.

B. The Attack Came When Israel was Exhausted

Deuteronomy 25:18

¹⁸ How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

Israel was walking through a dry, barren desert. Though they were headed to the Promised Land, and though God led them and sustained them, they still found the journey tiring.

The same is true of God's present-day people. We are promised the presence, power, protection and provision of God as we make our way heavenward. But that doesn't mean that we won't find ourselves weary and faint at times.

It is important during these times of physical or spiritual weariness that we remain vigilant; for it is then that we are most vulnerable to the enemy.

One thing we had better learn right away is that Satan almost never attacks us when we are on top of everything. He is a sly adversary. He often attacks when we are weary, exhausted and frustrated. It is for this reason that we are exhorted by Paul not to live in the power of the flesh, but by dependence upon God's power.

Ephesians 6:10

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Sometimes Satan's strategy is to instigate a series of annoyances, geared to reduce us to a state of weakness and frustration.

This is the reason James exhorted Christians to pray for each other.

James 5:16

¹⁶ Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

One of the lessons learned from this event in Israel's wilderness journey is that it is often spiritual conflict that drives home to us the necessity of prayer.

C. Moses Orders the Warriors Be Enlisted

Exodus 17:9

⁹ And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

Someone once said, "All real prayer is warfare."

When the enemy attacked, Moses and the children of Israel did not sit passively by hoping it would all turn out all right. Warriors were enlisted for the battle.

We are also in the midst of a great spiritual warfare.

Churches are cold, lost hearts are calloused, and Christians, on the whole, are casual about their Christianity. God is looking for men and women of faith, willing to stand in the gap through prayer and supplication.

God told Ezekiel, “And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none” (Ezek.22: 30).

The battle for the hearts and souls of the lost must be won by prayer. The battle against our cold churches and the casual Christianity of our day will be won only through prayer.

Someone once said:

Life’s battles are won or lost in the place of prayer, not on the battlefield of everyday life. The real spiritual success or failure of a church does not depend on the talent of the preacher, the size of the congregation, or the strength of the organization.

Success from God's point of view will only be obtained through prayer...God's business, for the most part, is to be taken care of on our knees. When dealing with any situation, first we must pray. For it is on our knees that the real work is done.

2. THE CAMPAIGN OF PREVAILING PRAYER

A. It Involved a Certain Cooperation

1. Moses was dedicated to God's mission

Exodus 17:14

¹⁴ And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

When Moses ordered that an army be readied to fight with Amalek, he was acting according to the revealed will of God. In fact, cooperation with the mind and will of God is inherent in prayer.

2. Joshua and the people cooperated with the directive of God's man

Exodus 17:9-10

⁹ And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. ¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

This cooperation between Moses and his people is the result of concerted prayer.

3. Aaron and Hur were determined to assist Moses

Exodus 17:10-12

¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹² But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

Prayer gives the saint a proper perspective on the battles of life. On the hill, Moses could see everything clearly. Perhaps if Christians would spend more time on the Mount Of Prayer, they'd see things from God's

point of view. God told the prophet Jeremiah, “Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty (“hidden”) things, which thou knowest not” (Jer.33: 3).

B. It Involves a Certain Confidence

Exodus 17:9

⁹ And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

Prevailing prayer changes things. That is because it is an exercise in faith and confidence in God, Who is the source of all power. Prayer is not a magic wand that we wave when we find ourselves in trouble. Prayer is our connection to God, Who is the source of supply for our every need.

C. It Involved a Certain Confrontation

Exodus 17:10-11

¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

Prayer should not be viewed as a passive endeavor. Prayer is warfare.

We must never forget that we are in the midst of a spiritual warfare. If you are seeking to live close to God, you can expect resistance from Satan. However, he can be overcome if we fight the right way. Paul said, “(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)” (2 Cor.10: 4).

D. It Involved a Certain Commitment

1. We must persist in prayer in spite of the frustrations of warfare.

Exodus 17:10-11

¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

Warfare is often a very frustrating endeavor. You don't always win every skirmish. It's often as it was with Israel during this battle. They would win for a while, and then they would lose ground for a while. Don't get fixated on the failures. Stay focused on the Father.

2. We must persist in prayer in spite of the frustrations of weariness.

Exodus 17:12

¹² But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

Hebrews 12:12

¹² Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

3. THE CONQUEST OF PREVAILING PRAYER

A. The Enemy Of Israel Was Defeated

Exodus 17:13

¹³ And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

The word “discomfited” means, “mowed down; disabled, prostrated.”⁹ It is the application of God’s power by persistent, prevailing prayer that wins our battles. Prevailing prayer is still the course of victory.

B. Israel Learned That God was Their Defense

Exodus 17:15

¹⁵ And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi: