

Partners in Prayer

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[0 : 00] For a short time, I would like to turn your thoughts to Exodus chapter 17 and the words that we have from verse 12. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat in it.

Aaron and Howard held his hands up, one on one side, one on the other, so that his hands remained steady till sunset.

So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword. There's a very interesting chapter that we have before us.

It tells us primarily about the power of the Lord in different situations. And the first thing you notice is, for the children of Israel, there was that stage when there was this shortage of water.

And we see how God, in a very miraculous way, met their need. But then the second thing we notice is the start of war. And how, again in a very wonderful way, God was in the midst of Joshua and his army, and God blessed them as they went to war against the enemy, against the Amalekite.

[1 : 26] And what I want us to notice, first of all, is this emergency that called for prayer. Because it was an emergency.

Now before going on, remember Peter when he went into prison. There are a few words in Acts where it mentions, but prayer was made.

When the people of God realized what was happening, and that Peter was in prison, they came together in prayer. That was an emergency that called for prayer.

From time to time in different situations, we might find ourselves doing the same thing. An emergency that calls for prayer.

But I want you to notice a number of things. You see, the enemy, the Amalekites, they are disturbed at the progress of God's people.

[2 : 29] The enemy disturbed at the progress of God's people. And as an individual believer or as a congregation, and you are making progress, that is, growing in Christ, growing in knowledge, growing in the grace of God, then the enemy is disturbed by this progress.

But then also, the enemy was disturbed because, not just the progress they were making, but because of the position of the children of Israel at that time.

The people of God were getting near to the enemy. Now, they were there because they were meant to be there. Sometimes we go very near to the enemy's territory and we're not meant to be there.

But here, the children of Israel were coming near to the Amalekite army and that disturbed them. So think of these two things.

The enemy was disturbed at the progress of God's people. And the enemy was disturbed at the position of God's people. They were very near.

[3 : 48] And that bothered, that disturbed the Amalekites. I think that the Amalekite army or the Amalekites, they saw this, or they saw the children of Israel as a threat.

A threat. Have you ever thought of that? That the devil sees your progress as a threat. And he will try so many different ways to thwart that progress that you make.

Now, there are three things that I want us to notice from this first point. The enemy wanted to delay the progress of God's people. He didn't, the enemy didn't want them to go on any further.

So they were going to do battle against them. And again, we should just think of that. The enemy doesn't want you to go on any further, spiritually speaking, and he will try in different ways to delay your spiritual progress.

Now, I'm sure you'll know that in your own experience. But then, a second thing that the enemy did, and a second thing he does with us is this. He disturbs our peace.

[5 : 12] And that's what he was doing there. And that's what he does with us. When we are making progress, not only does he want to delay that progress, but he wants to disturb the peace that we have.

Because when the people of God are making spiritual headway, there's a tremendous sense of peace. The Lord being with us.

But then, a third thing is that the enemy tried to disrupt the plans of God's people.

You see, they were moving on. They knew what they wanted to do. They knew where they were going, but the enemy wanted to disrupt their plans. Now, spiritually speaking, you might be in a similar situation, and the enemy tried to disrupt your plans.

Because God is leading you and guiding you, the enemy doesn't like it. So you can understand then from the point of view of the Amalekites, the emergency that called for prayer.

[6 : 32] Then came Amalek to fight with the children of Israel. Now, there's something else that I want us to notice. It's a word that you could say is old-fashioned in one way.

But when you think of it, it's very relevant. And it is this. How exercised Moses was in that situation.

How exercised he was. Now, from time to time, God, the Holy Spirit, will place things on our hearts and in our minds.

And we can exercise those desires that are given to us. God giving us a desire. And we exercise that desire that God gives to us.

and I believe in the case of Moses, God was showing him what to do. And Moses was accepting. Moses was exercised in that situation.

[7 : 36] I've only just been thinking along these lines, so I'm leaving that one point with you. But the third point that I want to think about is this. How enlightened Moses was in this situation.

How enlightened he was. He knew it was impressed upon him. He knew what was going on. He knew what was happening.

And I want us to think of it in this way. God was directing Moses. Moses was organizing Joshua and some of his army.

Now it's interesting to notice, not all the Israelite men were going out to be involved in this battle.

Only those who were able for this battle, this particular battle, were selected. Those that were able for it.

[8 : 38] And you know there are times when God may send a few here or a few there, as if they're selected because they are able to be involved in this kind of battle.

And that's what happened here. And what you notice is this, Joshua and his army, they were selected and Moses is saying, I'm going to stand at the top of the hill and he says, I will have the rod of God in my hand.

The top of the hill. That was a place of authority. I'm just leaving these words with you. It was a place of control.

But also it was a place of vision. Because as he was on top of the hill, he could see what was going on.

And he saw how the Israeli, the Lord's people, how their army was moving forward. He had that vision. But he could also see when the Amalekite army seemed to be moving forward.

[9 : 51] The vision that Moses had at this time, how enlightened he was. But also the prayer, lifting up the hands.

And David said that, I will bless the Lord at all times as long as I live, I will lift up my hands. And that is the picture that is given to us here.

Moses holding up his hands in prayer. But it is interesting that he had the staff with him. That which symbolized the presence of God in power.

The staff symbolized the presence of God in power. It's like when he was before the Red Sea, it is like pleading before the Lord, Lord, what happened then?

May it happen again. In other words, may we see the power of God at work. Now, I want to pause there for a moment.

[11 : 01] He's praying, praying, and he has the staff of God in his hand. He's praying, and he is praying, I believe, that which symbolizes the power of God, the Spirit of God.

We need more and more that we pray in the Spirit, that God gives us, that, you know, we know that stillness, that quietness, and we seek the presence, the power, the Spirit of God, so that we pray, not just words, or it's easy to pray words, but that we pray in the Spirit.

And it was good to hear the brethren this evening, not just repeating words, but praying in the Spirit. We need that more and more.

Then there's another point that I want us to notice. Moses was getting exhausted. Imagine, you might say, doing the Lord's work and he's tired.

Praying before the Lord and he's exhausted. You see, this was a difficult time for Moses and he knew that there was this particular responsibility laid upon him and he was exhausted.

[12 : 35] And it means, you know, that he couldn't hold up his hands any longer. And unfortunately, when his hands drooped and when he was tired, then the Amalekites were, you would say, making progress.

But when he started to hold up his hands, the Amalekites were being driven back. How exhausting it must have been for him. And if there is something that we can learn from that, it is this.

There are times when the people of God, doing what the Lord wants them to do, and they can feel a physical tiredness and exhaustion.

And we need to hold up our brothers and sisters in prayer because we don't know when they might be feeling exhausted.

Now, sometimes we might say, what's the point? What's the point in going on? But Moses wanted to go on.

[13 : 47] And that leads on to this third point, the encouragement that he was given. Because we are told about Aaron and her, and they played an important part.

They supported him in his time of need. Now, you notice a brother and brother, Moses and Aaron. but they were brothers because they believed in the Lord.

Remember the words of Psalm 133, where the brethren dwell together in unity. And what you have here is that Aaron and her, they're there to encourage Moses.

Moses. And what you have is a help in prayer. And you can put it another way. Here they are, the three of them, and they're partners in prayer.

Partners in prayer. Now, I'm not sure if you do this here, but I know in some other parts, there is what is called prayer triplets.

[15 : 06] Maybe, you know, folk that, maybe they can't get to the weekly prayer meeting, but it's not usually that, it's that, you know, they want to meet together. Two or three.

And they meet in prayer. Prayer triplets. And they're praying for specific things. And they're seeking to encourage the Lord's people in their work and in their witness.

Now, here you have partners in prayer. It's something to think about. It's something that is amazing.

Now, the person that I want you to think about for the remainder of this address, think about her. A man who was really needed.

We don't know what else he did. but at this particular time he was really needed. Have you ever thought that there may be a situation in which you, as an individual, you are really needed.

[16 : 19] Nobody else but you. You are really needed. needed. You may not have been involved in many other things before, but now you feel you are really needed.

So that's the first thing. A man who was really needed. A second thing to remember is this. A man who did what was necessary.

A man who did what was necessary. What did he do? he held up Moses' hands. In a sense, that's all. That's all he did.

But he did what was necessary. It was important. And sometimes we look on what we do and we think, is that important? That's not the point.

You're doing what's necessary. And you're doing it for, yes, the help of others. But you're doing it for the furtherance of God's kingdom.

[17 : 25] You do what is necessary. But then a third thing about him is this. Har was a man that was hardly noticed.

You can find other times when Har is mentioned. He was hardly noticed. Ah, but at this occasion, he did something that was necessary. He was needed.

but he was hardly noticed. Now, some people, that's the way they prefer it, where nobody knows what they're doing, where you're hardly noticed, but you are involved in the work of the Lord, and you're enabling God's work to go on to progress.

the last thing I want you to notice, how effective Moses' prayer was, how effective it was. See, his hands were steady until the sunset, until the enemy, until the enemy was defeated.

How effective his prayer was. Sometimes we think our prayers are not effective.

[18 : 39] you don't know. You don't know how effective your prayers are. And we find with Moses how effective his prayers were.

But there's a challenge that I want to put in here. Could it be that you have lowered your hands in the place of prayer?

Was there a situation for which you prayed a long time? Was there an individual for whom you prayed a long time?

Did you get discouraged? Did you get tired in the place of prayer? And did you start to think, what's the point? And maybe you lowered your hands in the place of prayer.

That person for whom you prayed, that situation for which you prayed, you're not praying for that person or for that situation again.

[19 : 49] In other words, you may have lowered your hands. prayers. Now, if you take that on a step further, could it be that the enemy is making inroads?

Because maybe as individuals, we have lowered our hands in prayer. Could it be that it was our prayers that prevented particular situations getting worse?

the enemy getting in more and more? And therefore, I would encourage you this evening, lift up your hands in prayer.

Seek the Lord in prayer. And if there are those for whom you have stopped praying or you have forgotten to pray, then begin again and pray for such people.

And we are told, what we are told us is, his hands remain steady till the sunset. You may not be able to do much more, but all prayer is so important.

[21 : 07] I knew a lady once and she was crippled, crippled, I think, with arthritis. But she spent her time in prayer.

The fervent, effective prayer. You might be thinking there is not much that you can do in the Lord's work or in Christian service. What about prayer?

It is the most important thing. So I leave these thoughts with you, just very briefly. The emergency that called for prayer, the enemy, was on the attack.

how exercised Moses was and how enlightened he was at that particular time. But also how exhausted he felt.

But alongside him he was given encouragement and his prayers were effective. If there's a lesson that we learn, well there are many lessons, but if there are two or three lessons to learn, the first is this.

[22 : 15] You might be aware of, you might be rather feeling a peace just now. And there are times when we feel tremendous peace. And this is not to discourage you, but we're to watch and pray.

You don't know when the enemy is lurking, seeking those who may devour. That's the first thing, be on your guard.

The second thing is this, never think that your prayers are ineffective. Always think along these lines, your prayers are important.

And another thought that stems from that, encourage others in the place of prayer. Uphold others in the place of prayer. Pray for those who pray.

Pray for yourself. And pray with his end in you, that the enemy is not going to get in any further. But that God's cause is going to prosper.

[23 : 16] God's people are going to go on. They're going to grow. They're going to see the hand of the Lord at work in blessing. Therefore, that our hands would be steady until the sunset.

Amen. We'll bow our heads in a word of prayer. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
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