

Warfare Praying

Text: Exodus 17:8-13

Introduction:

1. Questions: How many of you believe in the power of prayer? How many of you believe God answers prayer? How many of you would be honest and say “I know I need to pray more”
2. Context: The children of Israel have left Egypt and are traveling to the promised land. Water has just been provided for their thirst at a place called Rephidim.
3. The enemy’s fury is aroused by their presence and attacks.
4. Amalekites = descendants of Amalek, the grandson of Esau (Gen. 30:12, 16). They were the most powerful nomadic tribe in the Sinai Peninsula. Balam spoke of them as “the first of the nations” (Num. 24:20). They were cunning and cruel in their approach, attacking the weak and feeble (Deut. 25:17-18)
5. We note 5 principles of intercession that will help us in the battle

I. The Position of Intercession (Vs. 9-10)

- A. Moses & his companions went to “the top of the hill”
- B. Moses was seated (Vs. 12)
- C. The believers position in the heavenly places
 1. Christ is seated in victory (Eph. 1:15-23)
 2. Believers are seated with Christ in victory (Eph. 2:6)
 3. We pray from a position of spiritual advantage over the enemy.
 4. Taking our position in Christ also gives us clarity of vision over the battle field.
- D. The believer has access into the holiest of all
 1. Heb. 4:15-16 *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come **boldly unto the throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”*
 2. Heb. 10:19-22 *“Having therefore, brethren, **boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus**, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”*

II. The Persistence of Intercession (Vs. 11-12)

- A. There is a time factor in warfare praying
- B. The battle began in the morning and continued all day
- C. Moses grew weary, an indicator of the length of time involved
- D. The old timers called it “praying through”
- E. Illustration: Daniel (10:2, 12-13)
- F. Illustration: Battle of Jericho – 7 days of marching around the walls until the final victory shout
- G. Illustration: Missionary J.O. Fraser
- H. The battle is often won through a series of victories. Amalek was not vanquished instantly. The enemy retreats little by little, bit by bit. As God’s people continue to pray, he retreats some more. But we need to keep praying until a full and complete victory is secured! A lost soul you have been praying for finally comes to church. A victory is won! But don’t stop praying! Further victories need to be won to see a complete deliverance.

III. The Partnership of Intercession (Vs. 12)

- A. Moses, as the leader of God’s people, grew weary in the place of intercession. Aaron and Hur were able to partner with Moses and help him in the battle
- B. The Apostle Paul desired that the people of God would strive with him in prayer: Romans 15:30 *“Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;”*
- C. There is power in agreed praying: Matt. 18:19-20 *“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”*
- D. Illustration: The united prayers of the early church
 - 1. United in prayer as they waited for the coming of the Spirit (Acts 1:14, 2:1)
 - 2. United in prayer for boldness in the face of opposition (Acts 4:23-31)

IV. The Posture of Intercession (Vs. 11-12)

- A. The Rod of God
 - 1. Symbol of authority
 - 2. Spurgeon: “The rod was the emblem of God’s working with Moses, the symbol of God’s government in Israel. Learn, O pleading saint, to hold up the promise and the oath of God before him. He cannot

deny his own declarations. Hold up the rod of promise, and have what you will.”

- B. Uplifted hands
 - 1. Symbol of dependence upon God.
 - 2. Symbol of a life of purity (1 Timothy 2:8)
- C. Seated = position of rest in the finished work of Christ

V. The Power of Intercession (Vs. 13)

- A. “When men work men work, but when men pray, God works”
- B. Where was the outcome of the battle determined? With Joshua in the valley or with Moses on the hill top? The battle in the valley (activities) is important but the most important part of the war is waged on the hill top.
- C. Spurgeon: “The narrative points out to us that effort alone is not enough. Three men are seen wending their way up the steep sides of the hill, solemnly walking along, as if they had most weighty business on hand. They are seeking a point of advantage, from which to gall the foe with the artillery of prayer. So mighty was the prayer of Moses that all depended upon it. The petitions of Moses discomfited the enemy more than the fighting of Joshua. The edge of Moses’ prayer was more powerful than the edge of Joshua’s sword. It matters not how loudly Joshua shouts to his men, unless Moses fervently cries to his God. The young soldier would soon have left the field if the old commander had left the closet. Force and fervour, decision and devotion, valour and vehemence must join their forces, and all will be well.”
- D. The sword is powerful in the battle but it is most effective when wielded with the backing of prayer
- E. Illustration: Christ’s conflict with the devil in Matthew 4. Christ defeated Satan three times with the words “it is written”. But let us not forget that it was within the context of 40 days of fasting and prayer.
- F. Remember that the “praying always” of Ephesians 6:18 comes straight after the “sword of the spirit” is mentioned in Vs. 17
- G. Even Satan quotes the Bible (Matt. 4)! It is the sword coupled with faithful intercession that deals deadly blows to the armies of hell.
- H. Preaching on its own can also be powerless even if it is sound and biblical. This is why Paul exhorted the Thessalonian Christians to pray that the Word of God would have free course (2 Thess. 3:1-2)
- I. Our oft repeated comment “well I guess all we can do is pray” reveals our lack of faith in the power of prayer.
- J. If we truly understood just how powerful prayer is, we would pray more!
Empty prayer meetings testify to the lack of faith God’s people have in the power of prayer.

Conclusion: Questions: How many of you believe in the power of prayer? How many of you believe God answers prayer? How many of you would be honest and say “I know I need to pray more” Will you come and engage in spiritual warfare at our upcoming prayer watch?