

Exodus 29 – Who is Your Enemy?

Exodus (Names) - Changing the World

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Exodus 17:8-16

Geopolitical Review

- This map depicts the farthest boundaries of these ancient kingdoms
- Egypt had already lost its grip on Palestine due to the Signs of Exodus and the loss of the chariot force



Focus on Sinai

- The Arabian Peninsula supports no major empire
- Egyptian control of Sinai and Canaan is weakened
- Power abhors a vacuum
- Minor tribes fill the void



Canaan - "Wild West" Atmosphere

- No strong power because
 - Many different tribes
 - Nothing of real value
 - Each tribe vied for control over other tribes
 - Amalekites border Sinai
- Amalekites raid into Sinai



Amalekite Means

- According to some sources Amalek in the Hebrew may mean
 - Evil eye of doubt
 - Severed eye
 - Warriors
- Understood in this way Amalek represents spiritual blindness acting arrogantly in the world against God

<http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Tanakh/Sammaria/Tanakh/Amalek/amalek.html>

Who Were Amalekites?

- Biblical sources link the Amalekites with Amalek
 - Esau's grandson (Ge 36:12)
 - Became a chief of his own tribe (Ge 36:15-30)
 - Balaam called Amalek first among nations (Nu 24:20)
 - Amalek's territory located in the Kadesh area (Ge 14:7)
 - They were considered a nomadic, semi-nomadic tribe
 - Being tribal their territory would have "loose" borders

Tribal Warfare

- Tribal wars were not as modern nation-state wars
 - Every male had an occupation and was a warrior
 - Training would have been highly variable
 - Tactics would have been "raider" or "hit and run"
 - Conflict with larger or better trained forces would have been avoided unless their homes were threatened
 - Bordered Canaan and Sinai so they could plunder both

Bad News Travels Fast

- News of the destruction of Egypt's chariot force would have reached Canaan quickly
 - Egyptian forces in the area would have been withdrawn
 - Lack of funds would curtail Egyptian influence in Sinai
- Tribes would quickly expand their influence to "plunder" weaker tribes such as the booty-laden non-warrior Hebrews

God's Triad of Testing

- Hebrews would have been targeted quickly for plunder
 - They had the riches given by the Egyptians
 - They were "wandering" among the barren reaches appearing "lost" or leaderless
 - They appeared to have few supplies, thus weak
 - They were "strung out" indicating poor discipline
 - They had been slaves: no battle experience, no warriors

Discounted God

- Amalekites ignored or discounted the “stories” of how the Hebrew’s God defeated the Egyptians
 - They were the first people to attack the Hebrews
 - They attacked stragglers, plundering their goods (Ex 25:12-18)
 - They had no fear of God (Ex 16:1, 30; 17:10)
- Haughtily they attacked the main body with impunity

No Miracles in this Battle

- God defended the Hebrews against the Egyptians
 - To demonstrate His power to the world kingdoms
 - Prepare the world for the coming of His Son, Christ
- God does not miraculously defeat the Amalekites
 - Hebrews must fight their enemies following God
 - Hebrews cannot win based on their own desires

More a Brawl than a Battle

- Amalekites were not an army but tribal warriors
- Hebrews are not even tribal warriors, more of a mob
 - Lived under Egyptian protection over 400 years
 - Probably not trained in combat in Egypt
 - Could not fend for themselves for basic needs
 - No tradition of personal valor or bravery

Setting the Stage – Now and Later

- Moses picks Joshua, much younger man, from tribe of Ephraim (Major northern tribe)
 - Joshua to pick men to fight against the Amalekites
 - Joshua sets his force in array near a small hill
 - Moses stands on the hill with
 - Aaron - Tribe of Levi (Priestly tribe)
 - Hur - Tribe of Judah (Major southern tribe)

Amalekites Attack

- Apparently nearly equal forces in strength or skill
- Neither can immediately prevail over the other
 - Amalekites fight for plunder and individual honor
 - Hebrews fight for survival - have nowhere to retreat
- Fight lasts all day against the nearly equal forces

Moses and the Staff of God

- Moses used staff to
 - Influence Pharaoh
 - Initiate signs
 - Part /close Reed Sea
 - Strike the rock for water
- Symbol of God's power and authority with Moses



Renaissance View of Battle

- No armor as shown
- No horses, Amalekites used camels for travel
- Cavalry developed later
- Arrows not close-in weapon



God Teaches His People, Again

- Moses prays for his people depicted by
 - Holding up his staff with both hands
 - He is the intercessor between God and His people
 - God allows the Hebrews to prevail only through prayer
 - As a visible sign to the people that he is praying
 - Aaron and Hur hold up his arms with the staff
 - Demonstration of Moses' faith true deciding factor to win

Hebrews Learn Strength By Faith

- Victory attained only through Moses' intercessor prayer and NOT through works of personal valor
- Moses' faith in God exemplified by Aaron and Hur holding his arms "steady" (displayed consistent faith)
- Throughout Old Testament Israel wins when she walks faithfully with God and loses when she trusts herself

God Proclaims Amalekite Genocide

- First group God told Hebrews to destroy
- God told Israel to destroy all peoples in Canaan
- Thus, many reject Bible based on these decrees



Ancient (Tribal) Worldview

- Ancient societies viewed their salvation synonymous with their tribe or culture, like Islam today
 - Rebellious persons pushed outside of tribe did not live
 - Myth of rugged individual not true in American history
- Tribes viewed warfare as cultural clash of gods, Amalekites would always try to destroy the Hebrews; Hebrews ignored God by living with these tribes' idols

Tribal Survival Required Genocide

- Allowing tribal enemies to live meant death
 - An amalekite plundered Saul's body (15: 31-46; 25: 1,1-10)
 - Haman, an Agagite (descendant of Agag (king) of Amalek) tried to kill all Jews in Persia, everywhere (Esther)



Today's Worldview Today Only

- The Gospel goes to all the world (Mt 28:18-20)
- In the body of Christ all are one (1Co 12:12-13)
- Evangelism is via the Word of peace, not the sword (2Co 5:18-19)



Christians Not of the World

- Yet, even Christians are told not to be of the world, we are to evangelize the world (2Pt 2:20-24, 1Jo 6:9)
- Christians not to judge (condemn) the world for that is God's purview; we are judge the body (1Co 5:9-11)
- Natural man cannot accept the truth of Christ (2Co 2:14)

Amalekites Served Satan - Rejected the Gospel

- Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. (1Jo 3:8)
- Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. (1Jo 3:13)
- Thus, they brought destruction upon themselves as they did not fear the Lord nor seek His Gospel (2Sa 1:13-16)