

# Amalek Came to Fight

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The fallen nature of mankind is a horror story all its own. All too often we hear about some person who has been a good, practicing Christian who suddenly and without warning is caught in some gross sin. Believing husbands abusing their wives and children . . . prominent Christians caught stealing money . . . church leaders caught up in sexual immorality. The stories seem endless, and shamefully all too often are true. Why are so many believers continually falling victim to strong, powerful sin in their lives? Why so many spiritual casualties? And perhaps worse, why so many victims of those overtaken by sin?

We all know that such awful sins should not be. God's Word tells us that in Christ we have the power to overcome temptation. We often quote Scripture affirming the power to win over sin,

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. (I Cor 10:13 NIV) I can do everything through him who gives me strength (Phil 4:13 NIV)."

If the verses quoted above are true how can we bring them to bear in our own lives to insure that we won't be the next victims of overpowering sin? God did not place these powerful statements in Scripture as looming haunts to human failings. They were placed for a purpose . . . to provide assurance to the serious disciple that help is available.

## Look To God's Word

In order to learn how to apprehend this elusive victory, let's look to God's Word.

"For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and they all passed through the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ . . . now these things occurred as types, to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did . . . as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come (I Cor 10:1-11 NIV).

Here the New Testament is explaining the meaning of typological language contained in the Old Testament. It refers to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt into the promised land. Signal events of the exodus are foreshadows, or "types" corresponding to New Testament teachings. The first obvious parallel portrays the Egyptian slavery, or "bondage" as the bondage of sin into which all mankind is born. The next parallel is the occasion of Israel's "baptism in the cloud" as they stood on the first bank of the Red Sea. Here we see their "salvation" as God saved them by hiding them in himself, standing as an awesome foe to Pharaoh. Then the Israelites passing through the Red Sea can be typed as their water baptism. Can it not?

There remained then another significant event, they must drink from the Rock that followed them. This event is recorded in Exodus.

". . . Take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink (Exodus 17:5-6 NIV).

The River of Living Water flowed and all Israel did drink of it.

We see then three of the types from the Old Testament clearly fulfilled in the New Testament: 1) salvation typed by the baptism in the cloud, 2) water baptism typed by the passing through the sea and, 3) the baptism in the Holy Spirit portrayed by drinking from the "Rock that followed them" . . . Christ.

By glancing back over the typology of the exodus we observe too that mighty battles were fought during the deliverance of Israel from Egypt to their stop at the Rock at Mount Horeb. It is extremely important to note that up to this point God did all of the fighting of the battles on Israel's behalf.

But now at Mount Horeb a significant change occurs. Immediately after Israel drank from the Rock the Scripture says, "The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites . . ." (verse 8).

Based on precedent Israel reasonably expected God to come and fight the Amalekites for them. But Moses said, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites." (verse 9).

My reaction would have been at that point, "Hey! I thought God was going to do all our fighting! What's the deal, Moses? Why do I now have to fight?"

## A Lesson For Now

Applying this lesson to the twentieth century church, and your own Christian experience, have you ever noticed that soon after receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit everything in your personal life seemed to go wrong? Old sin you thought was gone forever is back . . . stronger than ever. And you pray, "God, come and take this out of my life!" yet it seems to only grow worse.

I want to be very specific here in the description of such sin. I am referring to sexual lust, gluttony, seething anger, uncontrolled temper, greed, manipulation, selfishness, homosexual tendencies, and the like. Sin the magnitude of which will destroy lives, families, homes, churches and communities if allowed to continue unchecked.

Unfortunately the problem described here is all too familiar to many who have made commitments to Christ is it not? And worst of all, prayer for deliverance seems futile. Why?

The answer is simple. Amalek is attacking. And just as with Israel, God isn't going to do the fighting, He's saying, "You must fight Amalek."

Why isn't God fighting this battle? Why doesn't He fight Amalek as He fought Pharaoh? The answer is found in the identity of Amalek.

Remember Jacob and Esau? Remember how Jacob came to please the Lord and ultimately his name was changed to Israel? Jacob then came to represent the spiritual or eternal. Esau on the other hand came to represent that which is temporal or immediate. Esau sought only to gratify his flesh. Remember how Esau traded his birthright for a bowl of soup? A single meal. Esau then represents that which is carnal or the flesh. Well, Esau had a fine, healthy grandson. He named the little tyke "Amalek".

So Amalek in our lesson stands for flesh, our own flesh.

God fought Satan, the enemy of our soul, for our salvation and won. Through water baptism He forever destroys Satan's ability to drag us back into sin against our own will. And once we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit intensifies our personal sanctification process. Alarmed that he is suddenly targeted for subjugation Amalek (our flesh) begins to fight fiercely! He raises his ugly head and begins to vehemently oppose all that is Godly! I am not speaking of Satan, or demons here, I am speaking of the sin that has been lodged in our own heart for years. A wise preacher once said that the ten commandments were given to humans, not to demons. God didn't say, "Thou demon of lust, thou shalt not commit adultery". He gave that command to man (and woman!).

Suddenly we find that things such as greed, anger,

sexual lust, gluttony, violence, jealousy, envy, hate, rage, etc., begin to surface in our lives. Alarmed, we cry out, "God, take this from me!" All to no avail. There is no answer to our desperate cry.

When this happens we tend to take one of two or three actions. Secretly we begin to panic inwardly . . . fearing certain defeat, we throw ourselves into feverish religious activity, thinking that somehow that will solve the problem. Or we simply ignore the problem hoping it will just go away. None of these choices will defeat Amalek. Note that had Israel elected not to deal with Amalek, their progress would have halted. Their growth would have stopped. Their inheritance would have remained elusive. They would never have entered God's place for them.

So as with the Israelites, Amalek must be defeated or he will ultimately defeat us. He will deprive us of our rightful inheritance in Christ. He will deprive us the joy of our Christianity. He will rob us of our home, family, church, work and, if he possibly can, our very life.

## The Battle Plan

Here the battle plan is obvious. With regard to our spiritual battles, we see in Scripture a principle: As we stand by faith on His Word God will overcome our spiritual enemies for us. He will fight any Satanic or demonic onslaught against us, our home, family or church as we stand by faith in prayer. Indeed we cannot fight such without His omnipotent outstretched arm. But He expects us to overcome our own flesh! God will not fight our flesh for us. We must do so ourselves.

But, must we do so alone? No! Indeed it would seem that we cannot do so alone. Let's look at the Scripture again:

"So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning . . . Aaron and Hur held up his hands one on one side, one on the other - so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekites with the sword." (Exodus 17:10-13 NIV).

Notice from this passage that as long as Moses remained before the Lord in intercession Israel would win. When he ceased intercession, Amalek would win. It was futile for Israel to go out against Amalek without Moses' intercession.

From this observation then a clear parallel can be drawn for those of us today who are fighting Amaleks

deeply rooted in our own lives. To repeat, our Amaleks are things like adultery, pornography, spousal abuse, child abuse, lust, greed, willfulness, selfishness anger and the like.

Obviously we cannot prevail upon Moses to come and intercede for us, but who are our Moses? They are mature Christians or elders (and "elderesses") in the Body of Christ. Here I am not necessarily speaking of those who are formally recognized in our churches as elders. Yes, they are indeed elders and may stand with us in battle. But we are not limited to these alone. In addition to them there are also the fully grown, mature believers in the Body of Christ who can and will stand with us in the stead of "Moses".

So how do we execute our battle plan to defeat Amalek? First, pray and ask God to provide you a strong, mature believer who will agree to stand in intercession for you as you fight Amalek. Strong prayer and intercession is the part of your "Moses". Incidentally, there can be more than one Moses. Moses, Aaron and Hur were all on the mountain top.

### **Paul's Advice**

Then your part is to follow the advice the Apostle Paul gave a young minister of the gospel named Timothy who was having his own battle with Amalek.

"Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (II Tim 2:22 NIV).

I see three elements of Paul's exhortation that needs amplification:

1. "FLEE" - In plain English that means "RUN! Feet, do your stuff!" It means do everything in your power to get away from the temptation. Don't do as a counselee I once knew who said he was tempted to go into dirty movie theaters because he passed by them every day on his way home from work. As the counselor began to look at a map to find an alternate route home for the young man it was discovered that the counselee was actually driving miles out of his way to go past the theater just so he would be tempted! Flee the temptation and all opportunities to allow Amalek expression.

2. "PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS" - This means that I must do what I know the Scripture teaches

whether I feel like it or not! I simply do it because it is the right thing to do. That means going to church, Bible studies and wholehearted participation in Christian fellowship.

3. Paul also said "pursue righteousness . . . **ALONG WITH THOSE WHO CALL ON THE LORD** out of a pure heart." This clearly means continual association with believers. It means making opportunities to meet with, associate with, and fellowship with those who love the Lord.

As I do my part by fleeing evil, pursuing righteousness and associating with true believers and my intercessors do their part, Amalek suffers defeat. Don't expect victory overnight. But do expect victory. It is certain.

Please note, when you enter into agreement with the one (or ones) whom the Lord gives you for intercession, be totally, brutally honest about your problem. Before God and your intercessors don't call it a "problem" or a "hang-up". Jesus didn't die for "problems" or "hang-ups". He died for sin. Identify the problem as sin. Call it sin. Ask God's forgiveness for your sin.

Then, having done all the above, take your stand against the sin and fight it! If you find yourself in hand to hand combat, call your Moses and ask him to pray! . . . but do your part. Run as fast and far from the temptation as possible. Run where? Towards Godly people, a Godly environment and the light of His Word! As we take these three steps prayerfully, willfully and resolutely, we will defeat the Amaleks in our lives!

If we do not I think it only fair to point out the alternative.

Amalek will eventually win.

Oh, it may take him five, ten, twenty or more years . . . but win he will.

### **Amalek's Victories**

We hear quite often about Amalek's victories. You know, the church treasurer was caught embezzling funds . . . a minister is caught in adultery . . . ad nauseam.

Rest assured, these ugly examples are at the end of a long process. God provides many exits before these things happen, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." (I Cor 10:13 NIV).

But to those who do not take the way out, it works like this: First, the Holy Spirit speaks about your Amalek's presence, second, the Scripture seems to speak of our sin

every time the Bible is opened to us. If we won't repent and face the facts and deal with Amalek, He sends those who love us to tell us we are in sin. All this is from His great mercy . . . it's still private. If we neglect all these opportunities to repent, God says, "OK, I guess we'll have to go public to uproot this one! It is at this stage our stubborn believer is a news headline looking for paper and ink!

I would much rather have a discrete elder in the Body of Christ prayerfully intercede for me as I fight and WIN over Amalek . . . wouldn't you?

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