

**MOSES & LEADERSHIP – Prayer**

***Exodus 17:8-16***

**Teaching for Peace Church**

**March 1, 2009**

**PURPOSE** - To call leaders to their ministry of prayer for their people/group, especially through the season of Lent.

**MAIN IDEA** – Just as Moses prayed for the Israelites, apart & above, with the Cross in hand, we pray for our group in the accomplishment of its purpose.

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

Let's open our Bibles to Exodus 17:8

1. We continue our evening series of teachings on Moses & Leadership – and we come tonight to a focus most fitting for the beginning of this season of Lent – The Leader & PRAYER.

(i) Moses & the Israelites have now left slavery in Egypt. They've crossed the Red Sea – on dry ground! They've been in the wilderness for a couple of months - Enough time to develop a grumbling spirit, here & there. That was last Sunday's teaching on leadership – HANDLING COMPLAINTS.

2. Today's passage is one of the better known stories in the Bible. The Israelites are attacked by the Amalekites.

The Amalekites were a tribal people that lived in the Negev Desert & Sinai peninsula. Biblically, they are long-known as an ENEMY of God's cause in this world. All the way back to when Abram rescued Lot from captivity (500 years before), it was the Amalekites that he fought against, among other tribes.

(i) Now, as the Amalekites are at it again. They attack the Israelites who are yet a FLEDGLING nation, an UNTRAINED ARMY, fresh out of Egypt. Under attack, what does Moses, the elader of God's people, do? He prays – for his group's people & CAUSE!

***Read Exodus 17:8-16***

## II. WHO / WHY / WHAT

Tonight's outline, you'll see on the back of your bulletin, is real simple:

Let me touch on the who, why, what of prayer ... then we can discuss together some of the HOW's from this passage & your experience.

I'd like for this to be a very practical teaching.

### 1. So let's begin with the WHO!

Who, as a leader, are you called to pray for? I'm mindful of this being the first Sunday in Lent and want you to think of a specific group of people you lead or have leadership responsibility in.

#### (i) FOR EXAMPLE

Alisa – is the leader of Trailblazers = a group of people whose cause is to provide quality Biblical education in a warm & positive environment. Trailblazers is a cause – and the members in the group – teachers & leaders - carry out that vision.

John – leader of Elders – their cause is to provide spiritual care for our membership – each knowing they are cared for, and accountable to the Word of God in their life - at home & in church. Elders is a cause – and the group has members in it. BOTH the cause & the members need prayer.

Larry – Council – its cause is more administrative, overseeing the mission of the church

Karen – KFC

Dave – CAYA leaders team

Jane – CWPT

Steve DeYoung – Deacons

Mark – Small group – their cause

In my case here at Peace, I've been invited to lead the Interim Ministries Coordination Board – 5 people on it – our CAUSE is to implement the strategic plan initiatives for the renewal of Peace Church.

The Israelites were people & a CAUSE – their cause was to get to the Promised Land – and begin a Kingdom which would exist to the glory of Yahweh!

(ii) Perhaps you can't relate to leadership in the church & its kingdom causes.

There are many others:

A FAMILY has leaders – Parents / grandparents / older siblings / husbands leading a marriage

What is your mission as a family? – (Blaauw's): *We exist to glorify God by blessing others in service & pursuing truth, beauty & goodness in life.*

- As head of my family, I'm the FIRST person responsible to pray for that cause – and each group member in it! (Others too – Karen, Rhiannon, Cam ...)

Teachers in the CLASSROOM – at School / Catechism

SPORTS TEAM / MUSIC ENSEMBLE – if you're an upperclassman – you're a leader! (not a formal position, but leadership nevertheless!)

- In the WORKPLACE

As we think about LEADERSHIP & PRAYER, we want to think about both the PEOPLE & CAUSE of our group.

The exercise of leadership is “influencing it toward God's preferred future” for that group. What is that preferred future for the group you lead?

Tonight, we're reminded that prayer is required for its accomplishment.

(iii) Before I move on to WHY we pray, let me remind you from Moses' example that the people you will pray for are less than all they should be!

That's the BURDEN OF LEADERSHIP.

A. Just last week – ch. 15-17 – The Israelites were grumbling, grumbling, grumbling – then they're attacked!

- Moses could have thought: “Serves you right!”

NO! A leader cares for the people in his group despite their foibles – and prays for them individually, as a group, as a CAUSE.

The people you pray for aren't perfect! (That's why they need prayer!)

PRAY FOR THEM – that takes largeness of soul!

(It's easy to do for family, but do it for your other places too!)

## 2. WHY?

Cause there's an ENEMY that attacks God's cause – THE AMALEKITES!

What they represent are the ANCIENT ENEMIES of God. In the New Covenant we know them to be: THE WORLD and its values – temporary / false values, opposing the values of heaven  
 THE DEVIL – and his schemes – he hates God’s Kingdom  
 SIN – in this body of death.

Those forces battle against your people & your cause!

(i) For EXAMPLE:

Worldliness – tells people that the church is unimportant – it serves you, you don’t serve it – so why show up to that Council meeting? That class?

The Devil – seeks to DISCOURAGE your cause – break up your family – bring discord between group members.

SIN – is in all of our bones – selfishness, laziness, blindness of heart (what’s our vision)?

OUR GROUPS - PEOPLE & CAUSES BATTLE AGAINST these “powers & principalities” (Eph. 6).

- They need leaders who pray for them, especially when the fight comes!

3. ... cause here’s **WHAT** prayer is.

Our story makes very clear that PRAYER IS THE BATTLE.

This victory is won, not primarily in the valley, but ON THE HILL!

(i) When Moses prayed for his people, they advanced.

When his hands descended, they retreated!

(Marionette?)

PRAYER IS THE BATTLE – not an AID to the battle – PRAYER IS THE BATTLE!

How they do depends more on Moses than Joshua! We must see that!

A. Sometimes God ONLY has his people pray – He just goes out & wipes out the enemy!

But most times, God has his people pray – then he gives them the strategies to get into the valley! EITHER WAY – prayer is primary.

B. PRAYER in this story is probably the HARDER WORK. Moses needs help to keep his hands up! The work on the hill is harder than the valley!

(ii) Through prayer comes God’s PREVAILING POWER.

First, prayer – before ideas, programs, people – first prayer

*Psalm 20:7 – “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God” ... for the well-being of the people we lead ... and the ADVANCE of the CAUSE we lead.*

PRAYER IS THE BATTLE!

### III. HOW

Let me jump in the HOW at this point and ask:

WHAT DO YOU GET FROM MOSES' EXAMPLE HERE, AS A LEADER PRAYING?

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED AS A LEADER WHO PRAYS?

(ANSWERS ON FLIPCHART)

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Here are some things that spoke to me from this passage:

1. WHEN – Moses prayed. He made separate time for it.

He didn't jump into the FRAY and squeeze prayer into the cracks of a busy day. (I do that – it's OK.) He didn't pray as he battled (I do that – it's OK – “Pray always” – I Thess. 5)

He made a SEPARATE TIME SPACE for it ... to pray for his group's people & cause!

2. WHERE – above fray. He found a GOOD PLACE to pray!

= some separation from the battle

... that sunroom / bedroom.

I.e. – my desk in my study – PRAY from the opposite side (now a table!)

3. PHYSICALLY – when his hands lifted, prayer prevailed!

Physical posture matters – knees

Physical rest matters (for me, beginning of a day much better than its end)

Prayer is physical.

4. COMPANY – Others – Aaron & Hur – helped him pray.

Find another person – set up a time

I.e. – me – Wednesdays – company / Family – mornings

We need help to pray! We need the encouragement & accountability & regularity of company to pray.

5. LISTS – put names down, record answered prayers (encouragement)

- keep a journal – write out prayers to keep the mind focused
- For Lent – write out your group – its people / cause

6. STAFF – Pray with the CROSS in hand (that’s our power & confidence)

=The cross represents all the Promises of God / Works of God

I.e. – Collect – before petitioning God, tell him who he is!

*God, you parted the seas protecting your people, you brought rock from a water ... now I take the staff in my hand ... IN THE NAME OF JESUS / His blood / His salvation ...*

... I pray for the WELL-BEING of my group’s PEOPLE (name them – let the Spirit bring to mind specifics) ... and the ADVANCE of my group’s CAUSE (name issues related – let the Spirit form!)

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In the work of God’s kingdom, prayer is not preparation for the battle. Prayer is the BATTLE. As leaders in God’s causes, we believe that and act on it!

1. Verse 13 – As Moses prayed, his people OVERCAME the Amalekites. Their cause advanced!

(i) From his example, let us be leaders who pray!

For – v. 16 – The Lord will be at war against the Amalekites (Satan, Sin, the World) from generation to generation! ... and will one day completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven (v. 14).

MAKE A COMMITMENT TODAY – for the next 6 weeks (Lent)

Pray for your group’s CAUSE, your group’s PEOPLE

Pray for them at a special place / time – every day or week – Establish Rhythm.

We’ll see God’s Kingdom grow among us!

2. Upon completing this victory, Moses piled up some stones – set up a MEMORIAL – called it, “The Lord is My Banner” ... = Jehovah NISSI

From a Word Study I read:

*In the OT, “nes” generally means a RALLYING POINT or standard which drew people together for some common action or for the communication of important information. This usually happened on a high or conspicuous place within a camp or community. There, a signal pole, sometimes with an ensign attached, could be raised as a point of focus or object of hope ... People would rally together a “nis” for various purposes.*

THE LORD is our NISSI – He is our Rallying Point.

Therefore SEE Moses’ memorial tonight and be a leader who prays for his group’s PEOPLE & CAUSE!

AMEN!