

JULY 16th

IT TAKES A TEAM TO TRIUMPH

“Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.” **EXODUS 17:11-13**

The FIFA World Cup arrives every four years. Even if you’re not a soccer (I mean futbol) fan, you can’t argue with the giant sports spectacle that this tournament is. Even casual soccer fans that show up every four years have joined the party. Even though the US lost their last match to Belgium, it set a watch record of 30 million viewers. Stars are celebrated. People are introduced to things like the “Viking Row” of the Norwegians. As stars dictate social media trends, it’s quite possible that stars don’t win matches (unless you’re Lionel Messi). It takes a team to win the match, since defenders can park it in the penalty area and shut down elite scorers. Is it much different in the Christian life? Sure, I have my spiritual heroes, and I’m sure that you do also. But those heroes don’t last forever...because they were never meant to. God points us to the purpose of the local church here in Exodus 17. A picture of teamwork that God uses to defeat the Amalekites. What does God show us here?

Of course, we must declare the giant elephant in the room. God doesn’t need anyone to accomplish His will. We’ve already seen ten plagues that judged the gods of Egypt. God didn’t need Moses or Aaron to do it. God didn’t need to ask Moses for advice on how to get a million people and their animals across the Red Sea. God simply did it...and used Moses to fulfill His purposes. As we read through the Older Testament, we will see God accomplishing His purpose in different ways. He certainly doesn’t need Moses’ rod here against the Amalekites or Joshua that is fighting the battle on the ground. But God. God chooses the means to fulfill His purposes.

We’ve got five that God uses here in this narrative: Moses, Aaron, Hur, Joshua, and Joshua’s army. This is the first battle for Israel on the way to the promised land. Did you know the identity of the Amalekites? They are a distant relative of...Esau. Seems like the sins of the father come back to other generations after all. Listen to how Moses describes the tactics of Amalek here from Deuteronomy 25: “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you came out of Egypt, how he attacked you on the way when you were faint and weary, and cut off your tail, those who were lagging behind you, and he did not fear God.” We assume here that their tactic was to target the women and children. But God. God uses his men to triumph; a team of people. Moses used God’s rod to help the army win the battle. But here’s the problem...battles can take hours. Even the strongest men will struggle to hold something in the air for hours. Moses needed Aaron and Hur to put a rock down that Moses could sit on, and they held up his arms. What an amazing picture of a team! They weren’t tasked with holding the rod...that was Moses’ job. But they were called to support his arms. It’s the same with Joshua and the army. They weren’t holding the rod. They were fighting. Joshua couldn’t win the battle on his own, he needed God’s men to fight with him.

Men, this is a picture of God’s people fighting the battle against Satan...together. There’s only been One who was equipped with everything needed that didn’t need anyone...His name is Jesus. Otherwise, God gifts different people to work together to fulfill His purposes. The elders in a local church can’t do it all; they were never designed to. Instead, God calls the elders to equip people for the work of the ministry. God’s call has always been for His people to fight the battle together. This means that you also are needed in the local church. For too long, churches have been led by women out of necessity, because men aren’t there and men don’t serve. It’s time for us to stand up together to serve our King. How will you be part of God’s team in His local church?

Spend some time thinking about your past service to the Lord in your local church. How does God want to use you today on His team?

For Further Reading: I Cor 12:1-31