

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

## "INTERCESSION AND INTERVENTION" | EXODUS 17: 8-16 | PASTOR BRIAN

### WARM-UP QUESTION:

If you had to pick a weapon to defend yourself, would you pick a staff or a sword?

### *"The Enemy and Engagement" - (Exodus 17:8-9)*

God allows the Israelites to be attacked and asks them to fight back against the Amalekites, instead of protecting them and fighting for them like He did in Egypt. What does this reveal about God and His relationship with His people?

### *"The Staff and the Sword" - (Exodus 17: 10-13)*

Moses' prayers had a direct impact on the battlefield, but he needed help from Aaron and Hur to keep praying until the battle was won. What does this say about praying with others? What are obstacles to praying with others people face today?

### *"The Blot and the Banner" - (Exodus 17: 14-16)*

Moses names the site of victory "The Lord is My Banner", signaling that God is where their allegiance lies, where they look for direction, courage and hope. What are ways for people today to show their allegiance to God and to let Him lead?

### REFLECTION QUESTION:

In this passage we see the people fighting in the field under Joshua and the people praying on the mountain led by Moses, both groups used by God for victory. Jesus both prays over us and fights for us, leading us to victory over sin. Do you look to Him as your banner, your source of courage and hope?

**Exodus 17:8-16****7-25-21****Intercession and Intervention** Defeating Amalek**I. Slide1 Announce:**

- A. Slide2-7 Lar: R&R. DC. CK. ATOM. Missions Prayer. Ministry Fair.
- B. Prayer for family who went back to the mission field (daughter short seizure early Sat)
- C. Baptism today. (Samwel & Elisifa). Prayer

**II. Slide8 Intro: Intercession and Intervention**

- A. The book of **Exodus** is **NOT** really about *wilderness wanderings*, because in ch.19 they land at **Sinai**, and will be there for the rest of the book.
  - 1. **Numbers** is really the book of wanderings. Where they took an 11 day journey and turned it into a 40 year agony. Yes they had to pass through the wilderness, but they didn't have to *live there*.
- B. This is a story about *Intercession and Intervention*, a Lesson on **Prayer**.
  - 1. Long before Paul explains to us *the armor of God* in Eph.6, we are tipped off here, there's **an invisible war** between the powers of darkness and the children of light. And the only way for us to prevail in this *spiritual battle* is by persevering in prayer. **READ ALL**

**III. Slide9a [1] THE ENEMY & THE ENGAGEMENT**

- A. **THE ENEMY / AMALEK**
- B. Numb. 24:20 says that Amalek was *the first among the nations*. The Amalekites were **cruel and cowardly**. They were notorious for *attacking people*. They would plunder people, they were basically **Land Pirates**. They were able to do this because they *domesticated the Camel* [Judges 7:12] (swiftness in surprise attacks).
- C. Slide9b **BACKSTORY**: Deut.25:17-19 NLT **Never forget what the Amalekites did to you as you came from Egypt. 18 They attacked you when you were exhausted and weary, and they struck down those who were straggling behind. They had no fear of God. 19 Therefore, when the Lord your God has given you rest from all your**

*enemies in the land he is giving you as a special possession, you must destroy the Amalekites and erase their memory from under heaven. **Never forget this!***

- D. The Amalekites were **a nomadic desert tribe** (Bedouins) ranging from Sinai northward to upper **Arabia**.
1. Their genealogy is traced to **Amalek**, grandson of **Esau**. *It was Esau fighting Jacob again.*
  2. Deut shows these attacks were **unprovoked**, attacking the **weak, sick, and helpless** Israelites lagging behind, as well they **lacked the fear of Israel's God**.
    - a) Since the Amalekites had **shown no mercy** to Israel, they were to **receive none**.
- E. Israel was to **blot out** the memory of Amalek from under heaven.
1. More than **400 yrs** later **Saul** was told to do it, **but** he kept King Agag alive
    - a) **1 Sam.15** says, that Saul wasn't willing to destroy them. **He kept the best, and destroyed all that was worthless and despised**. So God stripped the kingdom from him because of this.
  2. **David** defeated the Amalekites (2 Sam.1). **But** they were not completely wiped out till about another **300 years later** in Hezekiah's day (1Chron.4:41-43).
- F. *Slide9c Though the mills of God grind slowly; Yet they grind exceeding small; Though with patience He stands waiting, With exactness grinds He all.*
- G. *Slide9d-f THE ENGAGEMENT the physical battle, the Spiritual battle*
- H. Let's remember **our Bible** is **a battle book**. From the celestial battle of Lucifer up in heaven, **to** the last battle in Revelation on earth, it's **a battle book**.
- I. Like today we deal with enemies both from **within**, **and** enemies from **without**. This is the Israelites **1st opposition** since arriving **in the wilderness**, from **without**.
1. Maybe the Amalekites interpreted them being there as a **threat** to their **territory and its resources**. *we don't know*
- J. First Israel **watched** God defeat Egypt (Red Sea), **but now** they had to **enter the battle themselves** and **trust God** for the **Victory**.

K. **How** they are told to engage the enemy is interesting. **Some** engaging them on the battlefield, **and others** engaging them *on a different battlefield*.

1. On one side you have the Amalekites, mighty Bedouin soldiers, **and** on the other, ragtag former slaves, who were not trained, had inferior weapons, oh and maybe *not the will to fight*.

L. Thought the **attack** was a **historical event**, it pointed to a *higher spiritual reality*.

#### IV. Slide10a [2] THE STAFF & THE SWORD

##### A. THE STAFF

B. **Hands lifted high** (a posture of prayer) - In Ex.9:27-29 we had a picture of Moses interceding for Pharaoh with *his hands lift it up*. **International sign of surrender**. **Or** on a roller coaster, **you throw your hands in the air like ya just don't care**, revealing, *I am not in control*. Psalm 141:2 *Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!*

[NT also] 1 Timothy 2:8 *I desire then that in every place* (CM also) *the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling*.

1. **Hands:** they're for **work**, they're for **worship**, they're for **praying**.
2. They were **not** designed to keep in your pockets. They are **not** for sinning. They are **not** for touching your girlfriend **or** abusing somebody. Romans says, *don't use your members to sin with*.
  - a) **Instead** use these hands to **fight injustice**. Use these hands to **feed the poor**.  
To love your wife. Embrace your children. To pray.

C. **Victory/Defeat**. **Hands up / hands down** (most middle Easterners pray with lifted hands). For us **Hands folded / hands unfolded**.

1. Oh if we only believed *the importance of prayer*. **Israel wins/Israel loses**.
  - a) **What happens when we don't pray?** It's very simple, we start *losing the battle*.
2. Maybe the reason Moses went **up on the hillside** was so everyone could **see him**, **making sure that Israel learned the power of prayer**.
  - a) If Moses **didn't** do this they would've celebrated *their own military prowess*.

- b) Which is exactly what would happen if we were able to defeat our spiritual enemies *without prayer*. If we have the power to resist temptation and overcome habitual sin in our own strength, we would become *hopelessly self-righteous*. God brings us to our knees, where *in our weakness* we cry out to Him as our only Helper.
3. Moses arms grew tired. **But** then he realizes ... what happened **down in the valley** depended on what he was doing **up on the hillside**.
- a) What we learn about prayer life here, is not its **strength** but it's **weakness**.
- b) Moses grew tired, the prophet could not persevere in prayer. That's why we need *a better mediator, Jesus, who always lives to intercede for us*. Heb.7:25
- c) **Success in battle dependent on prayer**. People say that *the pen is mightier than the sword*, but in this case it was *the Prayer that was mightier than the sword*.
4. **Slide10b** The power of prayer is **not the prayer itself**, but the power of **God**. By praying we're acknowledging our absolute dependence on **God**.
5. **Aaron and Hur** teaches us of our need to **pray with others**. It is a picture of **corporate prayer**. [oh tonight is Missions Prayer!]
- a) *Corporate prayer, our best defense against the evil one*.
- D. Sometimes **prayer** is so **easy**. Sometimes **prayer** is so **hard**, it's a **battle**.
1. We know that **Jesus** must win the war, **but we** have an opportunity to help wage that war. **How?** We join the battle the same way **Moses** did, *through prayer*. It is by persevering and prevailing in prayer that we are **victorious** on the **battlefield of sin and temptation**.
- E. **Jesus' arms never get tired**. He is *the Greater Intercessor*.
- F. **But** it wasn't only *prayer*, **Joshua** had to *fight*.
1. It takes **intercession** on the mountain **as well as intervention** in the valley for God's people to win the victory. Warren Wiersbe
- G. **Slide10c THE SWORD**

H. (1) This is the 1st reference to Joshua - he'll become Moses' commander-in-chief and lead the Israelites' in the conquest of Canaan.

I. Although it is God's work to help us, we must be active in our cause.

1. Now that we are *alive from the dead* we must *wrestle with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness* if we are overcome.

2. I think we as Christians think of spiritual warfare far too much in *physical terms*. When we see *disease, depression, accidents, technical difficulties, natural disasters, warfare and terrorism*, we assume they are all direct attacks of Satan.

3. *Slide10d* But the real battle is not visible, it is *invisible*. The things that we can see are only *skirmishes* in the *cosmic spiritual strife* between God & Satan.

4. Yes the war is raging *all around us*, but more frightening is the way it rages *inside of us*.

5. Our real enemy is not *other people*, the real enemy is *Satan himself* with all his *unholy helpers*. They attack us even after we're saved, hoping we do something to *dishonor God* and *rob Him of His glory*.

J. Do you know that Joshua's name means *the Lord is salvation*. (יהושוע, Yehoshua is the proper Hebrew name for *Jesus*, shortened to *Yeshua*).

1. *Slide10e* We have a Joshua and a Moses in *one person*. *Yeshua/Jesus* who will both *intercede* for us and *fight* for us.

2. We can fight like *Joshua*, but if we don't pray like *Moses* we're not going to win.

3. *We need brave Joshua's* (female version of?) here in our *communities*. *We need brave Joshua's* that will engage those that are *exploiting the vulnerable*. *We need brave Joshua's* as *field workers* to all the nations. *We also need* those to *stay back* and be *praying* for them and their success. *Both are equally as important*. [*missions prayer tonight!*]

a) \* The daughter of our field workers that left yesterday, had a *small seizure* asked for prayer. *Samwel's wife Elisifa* died of Covid yesterday

K. So we have Jesus to **fight for us** (our Joshua) **and pray for us** (our Moses).

L. So we need to **fight** our *spiritual battles* like Joshua **and pray** like Moses.

## V. Slide11a [3] THE BLOT & THE BANNER

A. **THE BLOT** - *utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven*

B. **Blot them out** - God was so severe on them, most likely because of their **attack on the vulnerable**.

C. The Amalekites **will be utterly** blotted out. I looked for them at the Olympics opening ceremony **but** they never showed up ... **They don't have a flag**.

## D. Slide11b THE BANNER

E. I love their insight here. They **did not** praise Moses for his *prayer life*. They **did not** praise Joshua for his *fighting ability*. They praise **God** and Him alone. They gave **God** gave the victory, and **He** alone gets the glory.

F. (15) **Lord Is My Banner** (YHWH Nissi) - *a Divine title/Name, military standard, a piece of cloth bearing an army insignia, a Flag, Identity, Security*.

G. Today we would say **the Lord is my flag**. I pledge my allegiance to Him.

1. **Soldiers always look to their banner**. It establishes their **identity**. It helps them to know **who they are**. On the battlefield it also helps them **keep their bearings** and gives them **courage** and **hope**. **As long as their banner is still flying, they know that the battle is not lost**.

2. Everyone has a banner, something they look to, for **identity** and **security**. Some people spend their whole lives chasing after it, without ever reaching a place of rest. **What is your banner? What is the emblem of your hope? What do you look for courage and times of difficulty and despair?** Moses had the best answer, he said, **the Lord is my banner**. (**not** Jesus has a banner, **but is my banner**) **Rally to Him!**

H. Slide12 We as *believers around the world* are **like** #teamrefugee in the Olympics.

1. **These 29 Refugee athletes.** Competing in 12 different sports. From 11 different war torn countries. Training in 13 host counties. **Representing the plight of 80 million displaced people.** And all competing under **1 flag**, under ***the Olympic flag***.

I. **Slide13** *We are all under Flag Jesus* (not our denomination).

1. The Son of Man ***must be lifted up***, look to **Him**, look to **His cross**.

2. ***Our banner is the cross where He bled and died for our sins.***

J. **End:** **We see Jesus** in Moses ***leading*** his people. **We see Jesus** in Moses ***praying for*** his people ... ***on high***. **We see Jesus** ***ever living to make intercession for us.***

**We see Jesus** as our Joshua, our Savior, our deliver, leading us into victory in the battle. **We see Jesus** as our banner, our flag, the one who receives all of the glory.

K. **Keywords:** intercession, intervention, Amalekites, Amalek, prayer, corporate prayer, enemy, engagement, battle, staff, sword, hands, fight, Joshua, Moses, Jesus, Yeshua, Yehoshua, banner, Lord is my banner.