

THE BULLETIN

THIS WEEK:

Sunday:

Bible Study & Worship
Teen Devotional

Monday:

Fl. School of Preaching Class

Wednesday:

Bible Study

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 23rd – 4th Sunday Fellowship Meal
February 2nd – Coffee with Christians
February 6th – Teen Dinner
February 8th – Ladies Night Out
February 12th – Pre-teen Devotional
February 25th – 27th Yes Weekend

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE:

Month of January

Announcements:

Luther Honey

Singing:

a.m. – Mark Nortz
p.m. – John L
Wed. – Luther Honey

Prayer:

Larry Pahman

Bible Reading:

Preaching:

Doug Frazier

Lord's Supper:

Harry Collins
Cliff Jones
Tim Stanley
Ben Stokes

Prepare communion

Patty Honey

4th Sunday Fellowship:

January

Donna Lydon
Rhonda Howe
Tawny Collins
Angie Stokes

Give Him a Hand

By David Thurman

This article is taken from Gospel Minutes 1/7/2011 issue.

The Bible is full of interesting stories concerning the battles God's people fought and won. No battle scene is more compelling than the first battle the children of Israel had to fight after they left Egypt. As these former slaves were just coming to appreciate their new deliverance from bondage, a desert tribe fell upon them and forced them into battle. God wins that battle, but only after Moses and the people do their part.

Exodus 17:8. Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

9. And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand."

10. So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

11. And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

12. But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

13. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

15. And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-Is-My-Banner;

16. for he said, "Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." (Ex. 17:8-16). From this battle, Christians and churches can learn some valuable lessons.

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Start with Little Battles

Amalek was not a mighty nation. It was a nomadic desert tribe. It was known for its quick "hit and run" tactics. These tribesmen would swoop down, raid a town or caravan and hurry off. They certainly were not in the league of Egypt or Mesopotamia. So, as the newly freed people of Israel are just getting their sense of independence, they face a challenge. God is preparing them for the fact that, as a nation, they will have to learn to fight and defend their land. In coming years, that will include fighting the big nations around them. But, to take the big step, they need to learn a little first. So, they will fight off the people of Amalek. They will learn to fight by starting with a small fight.

For believers today this is still a good lesson to learn. When we volunteer to work in the ministries of the church, we should not start out with the biggest, toughest challenge. We should start with the small tasks. As Jesus said it, "*He who is faithful in a very Little thing is faithful also in much*" (Luke 16:10). This lesson is not just for the people starting out in a new work, but it is also important for those of us who recruit and encourage others to grow in their service to God. We should always see how people do in the little things before entrusting the bigger tasks to them.

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Get Your Hands Dirty

Even though God is going to win the battle for Israel: He still commands Moses to find a military man (in this case Joshua) and recruit some soldiers who will do the actual fighting. That is, even though God can handle Amalek on His own, He wants His people to get involved, to get their hands dirty in the work ahead. You see, they will have to learn how to fight battles and wars. When God led them out of Egypt, the Lord did all the work. The children of Israel never had to fight the Egyptians. But, now they need to learn how to fight on their own. It is not that God will not be with them in future battles, but that they need to do their part in God's plan.

This principle is still vitally true today. God can and wants to save everyone. "*And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation*" (Heb. 5:9). God sent Jesus to die for all souls. But, He is the source of salvation to those who do their part and obey Him. Today, this means putting your faith in Him, turning from your sin in repentance and be immersed in baptism to have your sins removed. And, beyond the process of salvation it means we, as God's children get our hands dirty in the work of the kingdom.

Know It Is the Lord's Victory

Although Joshua leads an army of soldiers out to fight, the battle is won on the hilltop where Moses first stands, and then sits. As long as Moses holds his hands up, the Israelites take the upper hand in the fight. If his hands drop, the enemy gets the upper hand.

Obviously, this is not a serious military method to winning battles. This is an act of God who gives the victory as Moses keeps his hands up. Raising one's hands on a hill above the battle will not win the battle, unless God is behind the whole process. Even though the soldiers of Israel had to get their hands dirty in the fight, the victory belonged to the Lord, and to the, Lord alone.

Again, this is something we must always keep in mind. "*But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Cor. 15:57). Notice carefully how Paul states this. God *gives* the victory, we do not and cannot earn it. While we must do our part in faith, repentance and baptism, the victory is the Lord's and the Lord's alone.

This is not just true when it comes to being saved. It is also true when it comes to working in the kingdom. "*/ planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth*" (1 Cor. 3:6-7). The men in the trenches are doing good work, but the growth and success of the church always comes from the Lord. The men fighting with Joshua were being obedient to the Lord, but the victory came from the Lord.

God's Way Is All that Matters

I find it interesting that God didn't tell Moses to send Joshua to West Point or some other military academy to learn the arts of war. He just tells him to recruit soldiers and go fight the Amalekites. Then, Moses has to keep his hands up all day, or the battle will be lost. In looking at this, it all can seem kind of silly, at least in terms of military planning and execution. But, as we have seen, God wanted the children of Israel to know the victory was not based on their military prowess, but on the Lord.

So, Moses does just the right thing. He doesn't argue, he just does it the Lord's way. I can't imagine how his soldiers felt when they heard this battle plan. Don't you think they wondered about going up on a hill, holding up your hands all day and the battle will be won? What soldier would want to put his life on that sort of plan? What is remarkable is that they did it just that way and it worked. Doing things God's way is all that matters.

Maybe this will help you understand why we put such emphasis on certain things. Why do we teach and insist on water baptism for salvation? Why do we have the Lord's supper on the first day of the week? Why do we sing without instruments? Why do we have elders and deacons, but no national conference or headquarters? The answer to all of these is the same. We want to be careful to do things the Lord's way. Moses could see the result when he failed to keep his hands up. We can see the result when we as Christians or churches fail to do things the Lord's way. Soon, the battles will be lost because we failed to do things God's way.

We Need Others to Help Us

Fortunately, Moses had help up on that mountain. Aaron and Hur were there to see that his hands stayed up. First, they dragged over a stone so Moses could sit down and keep his hands up. Then, they stood on either side of him and held his hands up so the battle would be won. And, this process took all day. That is a long time for an older man to keep his hands up. He could never have done it without the help of others.

Once more, we get a great lesson for us today. No Christian is on his or her own. All of us need the help of others. We need fellow brothers and sisters to encourage us and build us up. We need someone to give us a hand every now and then. That means we cannot be too proud to accept help. That means we cannot serve God in isolation, on our own without the fellowship (think church) of other Christians.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near" (Heb. 10:23-25)

You see we need each other to keep our hope and faith strong. This takes place when the body assembles. This takes place when we work together in the church. We need each other to gain God's victory.

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Remember the Victory

The last thing Moses does is important. God tells Moses to take note of this and write it down. Then Moses builds an altar to commemorate their first battle field victory as a people. In these two simple steps, we are reminded why God chooses memorials *for* us. The Lord doesn't want us to forget what He has done for us. So, each first day of the week (Acts 20:7) we take the Lord's supper to remember and proclaim the Lord's death (1 Cor. 11). Moses set up a memorial to compel' the children of Israel to remember. God set one up for Christians to get us to do the same thing. Too often Christians have short memories. We forget we were lost and without hope. We forget it was God's amazing grace that took us out of our sin. We forget that Jesus paid the price in His willing sacrifice for us. That is why we need to remember. That is why we need to commemorate. God wanted Moses to do that, He wants us to do that as well.

What Hill Are You On?

Moses didn't pick up a sword and go fight. He went up a hill and held up his hands. This was the place he did his work, not in the actual battle. This is important to consider. Sometimes the best place for us as Christians is not down in the trenches, but up on a hill calling on God to lead the soldiers to victory. Putting it simply, sometimes we need to spend more time praying and less time in battle.

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak" (Col. 4:2-4).

Whose Hands Are You Lifting Up?

Beyond praying, we can become better at holding up the hands of those who work in the kingdom. We can encourage, our leaders, our workers, our teachers. *"Therefore encourage one another and build up one another" (1 Thess. 5:11)*. Let us determine to be like Aaron and Hur and win the battle by supporting others who are in the fight.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ANGELS ARE REJOICING: Lane Presnell was baptized this past Wednesday night. We pray that Lane will have a long life in service to our God and Father and that we will be a support to him.

SYMPATHY: Is extended to the Purvis family in the recent death of Betty Purvis.

SICK AND/OR INJURED:

- Betty Hitchcock has been in the hospital for several days and is now home recovering. Her recovery is slow. Please keep her in your prayers. She probably will not be out and about for awhile until the weather warms up and she gets her strength up.
- Ann Ewing has moved from the Shands Rehabilitation Hospital on 39th Avenue back to Shands hospital. She continues to have health issues. She developed pneumonia while at the rehab facility. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.
- Continue to remember Mike Elledge, Shirley Kirby, Sherrelle Kendrick, Carolyn Canady (Rhonda's Mom), Jean Gause, James Harrison, Rhonda Howe, Cristy Butts (cousin of Randy Howe), Edward Brown (cancer building at Shands).

YES WEEKEND: It is time to start planning our annual YES weekend trip to Valdosta. YES is scheduled for February 25th-27th. There is a sign up sheet posted in the back for those who are interested in attending. The Theme is "IT IS TIME.... TO OBEY, TO LOVE, TO CHECK ATTITUDES, TO SERVE, TO WORSHIP, TO CHOOSE." Cost is \$30 per person (includes 2 nights' hotel, Sat. lunch and dinner) T-shirt is by *pre-order only*, for additional \$10. Money for food – Friday dinner (fast food); Saturday and Sunday breakfast (fast food or the hotel we stay at may offer a continental breakfast) and Sunday lunch. Deadline for payment is **Wednesday evening, 2/9**. Payment can be given to Doug or Jessica. Please see Jessica if you have any questions regarding the trip.

TEEN DEVOTIONAL: We will be having a teen devotional after PM services today on at the Frazier's house.

CAMPING: See Donna about the annual camping trip that our young people take every year. We need to make reservations early in the year because camp sites will book quickly after the first of the year.

TO OUR VISITORS

It is our sincere desire to help all men and women understand what God's will is for their life. Here at the Alachua Church of Christ, we stand ready and willing to help you with any needs you may have. Here are just a few of the services we offer: Marriage Counseling, Family Counseling and Addiction Counseling, free audiotapes of any lesson and In-home Bible Study. Feel free to make your request known. Ask any member of the congregation.

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Meeting Times:
Sunday Morning
Bible Study: 9:30
Worship: 10:30

Sunday Evening
Worship: 5:30

Mid-Week Bible Study
Wednesday 6:30

We're on the Web!

alachuachurchofchrist.org

From Doug's Desk

I want to encourage each individual here at the Alachua church of Christ to do their best to mention the gospel to someone this week. It is our job as disciples of Christ to preach the gospel to all. Mark 16:15, "And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

The world is sin sick and the gospel is the medicine that can make them whole again. For it has the power to save. Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." There are many who need to hear the gospel but it is up to us to teach them. So we must begin one person at a time and tell them the good news. So let us do our part and promote the gospel this coming week. Let's all try to invite one person to worship services next week. Remember the lost can not be saved without hearing the message.

Sunday Morning Lesson – The Second Coming of Christ

1. No one on the _____ knows the exact day of the Lord's return.
2. The Bible says that the Lord will come unexpectedly as a _____ in the _____.
3. The Lord will come _____.
4. The Lord will return _____.
5. The Lord is not coming to set up a _____.
6. The Lord is coming to _____ the _____.
7. He is coming to _____ the _____.
8. Are you ready for Christ to _____?

Sunday Evening Lesson – Daniel Purposed In His Heart

1. Daniel endangered his _____ and risked his position to be _____.
2. Daniel risked the lives of others to be _____ to God.
3. To have purpose means to _____.
4. Daniel was ready to make the _____ necessary to obey the Lord.
5. We must purpose in our hearts to _____ to the Lord.
6. Cleave means to _____.
7. We can not allow _____ or _____ to interfere with our faithfulness to worship God.
8. We must purpose in our heart to keep our self _____.
9. God demands _____.
10. Your body is a _____ not a _____.