

We Need More Hurs!

by Bob Young

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This fall I have been restudying and teaching “Old Testament Survey.” Although I have read the stories again and again, they constantly amaze and refresh. They provide encouragement and hope (Rom. 15:4).

In Exodus 17 is found the story of Israel’s defeat of the Amalekites. Almost immediately after God’s people experienced deliverance from the Egyptians, problems arose—unsuitable drinking water, grumbling about the food (or lack of food), lack of water, attacks from other tribes. Moses employs a unique plan to defeat the Amalekites. While Joshua fights the Amalekites, Moses, Aaron, and Hur go to an overlooking hilltop to observe. Moses lifts his hands to the Lord to receive strength, and as long as Moses holds his hands up, Israel is winning. When Moses’ hands grow tired and are lowered, the Amalekites begin winning. Eventually Moses sits down on a stone, and Aaron and Hur, one on each side, hold up Moses’ hands. Thus is the victory assured for Joshua and the Israelites. I believe this is one of a continuing series of stories of faith.

Several lessons come to mind.

First, our victory is always from the Lord. We depend upon God by faith. The power that enables success is provided by God. Moses names the altar constructed as a memorial to the event “the Lord is My Banner.”

Second, we do not do the work of God alone. We not only depend on God, we depend on one another. There is no effective solo version of Christianity. Many times we cannot do what needs to be done by ourselves. We need the faithful help and involvement of the entire body of Christ.

Third, the work of God is always done by faith. There is no obvious connection between uplifted hands and the victory of Joshua, but Moses, Aaron and Hur persevere and thus Israel wins. Faith acts even when it cannot see the way or the connection.

Finally, the work of God requires consistency. The text says that Moses’ hands were steadied by the support provided by Aaron and Hur. Steady hands, faithful hands, are essential to the victory.

This week, I thank you for faithfully holding up my hands and for holding up the hands of this church. Many of you make possible the victories and successes experienced. You stand beside and hold up hands by generously supporting mission work, by your continued faithful presence at the activities of this church, by your faithful attendance at every class and worship and Bible study, by teaching Bible classes, by demonstrating love and compassion, by serving funeral meals, by facilitating small groups. You hold up hands by sending “love notes”, by encouraging words, and by faithful examples.

We need more Aarons and Hurs. Will you be one?