

# Israel Prevailed

Exodus 17:8-16, "Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. 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." 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. And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. 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. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. 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." And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner; for he said, "Because the Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.""

Let's pray. Oh heavenly Father God, we do thank You that You have recorded these things for our instruction. You have recorded them for the blessing and instruction of Your church. Father, we do thank You that You are the One with all wisdom and we do pray Lord that You would be with Mr. Horn now as he comes and instructs and expounds upon this text Father. We pray that You would grant us ears to hear that we might be instructed, equipped to do Your service, to do Your will, to fight the battles You call us to fight. Father we do pray that You would help us now, You would bless this service. Bless our hearing, bless our understanding and bless the preaching of Your word. In Jesus' name, amen.

As we come to this next passage, I said last week that I tend to use this passage and the passage from last week a lot because I think that they're instructing things that are really important for us to understand. I think especially this week's passage explains the state of our country, it explains why we have the problems that we have, it explains why the church is in the state that it's in. This is not something that is far off from a battle that took place 3,400 years ago. This is something that was written down and recorded for us to know now and for us to apply now. Just like last week we talked about how this was the picture of the gospel that the law had to strike Christ, the rock, so that the water would flow forth. That God creates these people to do actual things that are like living parables that describe truths that we're supposed to remember and we're supposed to understand and we're supposed to continue to apply. Just like Moses who represented the law in last week's passage, which we get from 2 Corinthians 3, Moses still represents the law in this passage. This passage that Moses is standing at the top of a hill and they have victory against Amalek, it's telling us things that we're supposed to know so that we do them. We live in a country that's filled with anger, filled with division, filled with calling evil good and good evil, filled with injustice. We live in a country that's losing the war against sin as our government gets bigger and bigger because sin gets worse and worse. We live in an age

where the church is losing its war against sin, where we see everywhere around us increasing sin from sodomite marriage, from the murder of children for the sake of their parents, for the mutilation of children on the altar of political correctness to change their gender, and all these things come back to the same issue, why isn't the church having victory over sin? This passage tells us why the church doesn't have victory over sin. Just like last week, before I go phrase by phrase, I want to give an overview of the passage and what the picture is here because we need to understand what these things represent so we can understand the picture and how it applies to us today. So first, as I said before, Moses represents the law. In 2 Corinthians 3 it said he had to wear a veil over his face because whenever the Israelites would look into his face they would recognize their condemnation, they would recognize that they deserved death because the law demonstrated to them that they deserve the wrath of God. So Moses represents the law. Joshua is the head of the army of Israel and Joshua represents the obvious, Joshua is the transliteration in Hebrew for the same word that is transliterated from the Greek to Jesus. Joshua represents Christ, he represents Jesus Christ. This is the picture of Jesus Christ leading Israel, the church of God, to war. Then you have Amalech. Some people say that Amalek represents the antichrist. I would argue that, based on other things from the passage, that Amalek represents sin. That's what the church is supposed to be at war with, it's supposed to be at war with sin. That's what Jesus Christ came to do, to undo the work of the first Adam. Through the first Adam sin came and permeated through all of creation and now the second Adam came to remove that sin. He does it through His church, He does it through the preaching of the Word, He does it through the church being at war. Not a physical war, but a spiritual war. Not a war with the sword, but with the sword of the Word. We see that in the passage that Noel read, 1 Samuel 15, why did Saul get rejected as being king? Because he thought he could compromise with sin. The Amalekites were supposed to be wiped off the face of the earth, but he says this one little area has such good cattle, Agog is such a great king, we don't want to kill him. Everyone else is fine to kill, we will destroy the sin we don't like, but the sin that we like we will keep. So God says this is evil so therefore Saul is rejected, he's rejected from being king of Israel. So what's the basic picture here? The basic picture is when Moses is lifted up, when he's holding his hands high, the church is victorious in the world and when Moses is held low the church is defeated in the world. That's the picture of the passage, sin advances when Moses is not lifted up, when the righteousness of God is not declared, sin advances in the world. Why do we have sodomy approved in this nation? Because the church isn't holding up the law of God, because we're not speaking out and saying what God has commanded is a good thing. So what do we expect when the church won't shine forth the light? You get more darkness, you don't get more light. So of course Moses is not able to hold up his hands long by himself so he has two helpers. He has Aaron on one side and who is Aaron? He's the first high priest. Who's supposed to hold up the law of God? Who's supposed to hold up Moses? The church is supposed to hold up Moses. Who's on the other side? One the other side is Hur, who is Hur? We find out from Exodus 31:2, "See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah." Of course Judah is the tribe that rules, Genesis 49:10, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people." Who's supposed to hold up the law? The church and the state. When that happens, what happens to sin? It gets defeated. God tells Moses, the first time in Scripture that someone is told to write something down, is this passage. He says to write

this down, this is important for you to know, this is important for you to understand what was going on here and it wasn't just about that battle. This is how the church is victorious in the world, it's not by being ashamed of what Jesus Christ said, it's by teaching the nations to obey all things Christ has commanded. It is the Great Commission, that's how we have victory in the world. We know what's happening right now, the world is defeating the church. We know that the world will be won by the church, the gates of hell will not prevail against the church of Jesus Christ. There have been times, there are times, and there will be times when the church is being pushed back by the world, when the church is being defeated by the world and that's what is happening right now. God is telling us that this is what you do about it. You don't come up with some great strategy where you somehow manipulate the kingdom to expand, the gospel to command. It's simple, you declare the truth's of what God commanded. That's how the church has victory over sin and we can know that we're failing to do this right now by looking outside our front doors because we know we're failing because we look at our country and it testifies to it. So we should take this passage as a rebuke to us. The world is being overrun by sin because the church is ashamed of the law of God. Even though I remember the movement from some years ago, 'What would Jesus do?' People would wear bracelets and all this stuff, but the answer is really simple. He would obey the law because if He didn't obey the law we would all go to hell. We all know what Jesus would do because it's described in Deuteronomy, it's described in Leviticus, it's described in Exodus. We know what Jesus would do, but are we ashamed to say it? Are we ashamed to say this is what God says righteousness is and He is right and woe to those who call evil good and good evil? Did Christ think sodomites should be put to death? Did He think transvestites were an abomination? Did He think witches should be put to death? Did He think a son that was rebellious to his father and mother, even though he lived in another city, they were to go to that city and if he was found to be a drunkard and glutton he was to be put to death? Did Jesus Christ believe all those things? Yes, because He wrote them and gave them commandments to say this is good and this is right and this is just and this is merciful and this is loving. This is the sum of every one of those laws, love your neighbor as yourself. The visible law wants to apologize for the law of God which is why, as a nation and through much of the world, sodomy is embraced and gender confusion is filling the discussions. Male and female He made them in the image of God, but we now say there are multiple genders beyond two. We have all this foolishness because we are ashamed of the gospel because the law is part of the gospel and the law says you need a Savior, you need the blood of Jesus Christ to be freed. So as we consider this passage in detail, remember it was given to us so we could understand these things. It was given to us so we could apply them and we could do them now. They weren't just recorded so we know the story of Moses, Joshua, Hur, and Aaron, it's so we can remember now and we can respond rightly now.

Verses 8-10, "Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. 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." 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." So it starts with Amalek and I already talked about what I think Amalek represents, but we should consider who he was. There was an Amalek that was a grandson of Esau but he was probably just named after someone before

him. The first time we hear of the Amalekites it was at the time of Abram. Chedorlaomer had conquered Sodom and Gomorrah along with other cities and set them under tribute, but after a season, I think like thirteen years, they decided to rebel so Chedorlaomer went to attack them and in Genesis 14:7, which is the first time we hear of the Amalekites, "Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar." So the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah then go out to fight with him and they get defeated. Very clearly the Amalekites are allies of Sodom and Gomorrah, but Chedorlaomer after he defeats these five kings, after he defeats their armies, Abram takes his household and staff and attacks them in the middle of the night and defeats them. This is the picture, this is the same picture that we see here. Righteousness is what will have victory, righteousness is what will defeat the Amalekites. So one reason to understand the history is that it's likely that they had some idea of the promise that had been given to Abraham. They were there, when he goes and rescues Lot, he brings back all the Amalekite stuff, he re-establishes them as a people so it's not unreasonable for them to know about the covenant. As they hear the Israelites had left Egypt, it wouldn't be surprising if they knew this was the land that was promised to Abraham and they realized they lived there so they decided to attack first. Remember, it's the same thing with the wise men, it's these Gentiles that they believe the promises more than the Israelites did, more than the Jews did when Christ comes because they remembered Daniel and the star in the east so therefore they should go because it was the King of the Jews that was born. Here it was more than likely that they remembered things the Israelites forgot about or didn't believe. So they remembered, not in a salvific sense, but they believed in the promises of God and that they would be displaced so they come and attack. "Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim." They came to attack Israel as they are headed to the Promised Land. This is a normal response to be attacked. This is what the church has to expect, this is what it has to believe will be the response, just like Cain attacked Abel, this is always the response of the unrighteous to the righteous. Here it's just the picture of the righteous because we know they are unrighteous. The wrath of God is upon them and it going to kill them all in the wilderness, but even the picture is enough to cause the unrighteous to come and attack. When we think of the picture of sin, sin is an aggressor. Hebrews 12:1, "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." Sin actively ensnares us, we have to fight against it. Not because it's there and you just walk around it, it actively seeks you out. The world, the flesh, and the devil, they're all actively seeking which is why sin so easily ensnares us. We should always be prepared for an attack of temptation and an attack that there's new opportunities for sin to appear. Sin makes itself look like it's safe to pursue it even though the end of it is death. We should expect that to be the response. We should expect there to be active working of the powers and principalities of the air if we are working to expand the kingdom of God. Notice when it happens, it's at Rephidim. They came to fight when Israel is still in the same place where they had groaned and complained and blamed Moses for coming there to kill them of thirst in the wilderness and he struck the rock and the water flowed out. Just after they had this picture of the gospel, the Amalekites attacked. They hadn't moved and still there's already attacks of sin. We should recognize this is common in the life of the believer, is that sin attacks, that we need to fight against sin. It will either be killing us or we will be killing it. We can't be passive against sin

because it will always come to attack. So “Moses said to Joshua”, this is the first time that we hear about Joshua. Clearly he’s a picture of Christ, he’s the one who leads them in the Promised Land, he’s the picture of the one that comes after Moses that’s greater than Moses. Moses couldn’t actually get them into the Promised Land, the law cannot do that, the law cannot save, it requires Joshua to get them into the Promised Land. Moses is never enough, it requires Christ. All kinds of things point to the gospel with Joshua. Joshua means ‘Jehovah saves’, his name was actually Hosea which means ‘salvation’, it was Moses that called him Joshua. So the first time that we hear about him he is going to fight the Amalekites. He’s going to lead because Moses appointed him. There’s a real sense that Moses designated Christ. 1 Peter 2:21-22, “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth.” Because He fulfilled the law of God, that’s how he was designated, that’s how we know that He is the Saviour. The law designated Christ who is the only one that could fulfill the law. So Moses says, “Choose us some men.” When we think of the law defeating sin, we need to understand the primary picture here is not on an individual basis, this is a community fighting against sin, this is the church fighting against sin. Obviously there is an individual application to this, we need to be fighting sin in our own lives, we need to be saying this is what God says is good and righteous to do in our own lives. As I said before, you’re killing sin or sin is killing you. This is a picture of the church advancing in the world, turning back of societal sin. Not everyone is chosen for the fight to fight against their own sin, everyone has a responsibility to do that, but there are people that are chosen to fight against the sin in the world. Some people stay and they minister in the church and other people have a responsibility to lead in the world, to declare this is who God is and this is what He said is righteous. Part of those who are chosen to do this are elders. The responsibility of every elder is to deal with communal sin. If an elder won’t deal with sin, they shouldn’t be an elder because that’s the role. We want to think that the role is that you go up and make eloquent sermons, that you’re charismatic, that you attract people to the church, but that’s not the role. The role is to defeat sin. Growth of a church is in holiness, not numbers. For a church to grow in holiness, it means that the church is fighting against sin. So Joshua is told to choose some men and I’m not saying elders are the only one, but the fighting of communal sin requires men that will fight the battle, will go out and “fight with Amalek.” Joshua and the men are required to go out and fight Amalek. Amalek wasn’t attacking their camp, Deuteronomy 25:17-19, “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, 18 how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God. 19 Therefore it shall be, when the Lord your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.” The Amalekites weren’t attacking forthright, they were attacking the weak, they were attacking the stragglers, they were attacking the people that were behind, the people that were having trouble keeping up. We need to recognize this is always where sin attacks. Sin is going to come into the church, it doesn’t come in through ones that are faithfully reading the Scripture. It doesn’t come in through the ones that are truly seeking God, it comes in through those who are struggling, those struggling in their marriage, those struggling in their walk, those that are stragglers and aren’t keeping up with where the church is going and the teaching of the church. I’ve seen this time and time again so the church has a real

responsibility to make sure we bring everybody along, make sure that we're encouraging the weak. We've done a number of excommunications and almost every excommunication people come to me and I say to myself, I saw this and I never said anything; I saw him doing this and I really should have said something but I didn't. That's letting the stragglers be attacked by the Amalekites. We should be really careful to come alongside those who are struggling. God says the purpose for the meeting, the reason you are not supposed to forsake the gathering of the saints is so we can exhort one another to love and good works. That's why He says it in Hebrews and we need to recognize what we're supposed to be doing, we're supposed to be protecting the weak against the attacks of sin. That's what we're supposed to be doing. We've seen corporate worship shut down, but I want to argue that corporate worship has been shut down for probably a century in America because you come, sit in a pew, hear a sermon and walk out. The purpose of gathering together is to do what? To exhort one another to love and good works. If they're not talking to one another, are they actually meeting in corporate worship? They're coming to hear a sermon. We need to remember why we're supposed to gather together because of course the church is going to be weak if the church won't protect those who are weak. When we have our meal every week, when we sit there and break bread and when we do the Lord's Supper together, let's make sure we're using that time well. Let's make sure we are using that time diligently. I know in the past we have failed, I fail. Let's make sure we are helping those who are weak and not just letting them be attacked. That doesn't mean that we can't save people, but we can fulfill the role that we've been given to do. Just like Joshua has victory not because of Joshua's great strength or his great arms, but because Moses is holding his arms up, but Joshua still had the duty to go and fight. Let's make sure we are doing our duties to one another. When people stop coming to things we should talk to them. How many times have we seen that? They slowly withdraw from the church, they're a straggler. Instead of coming and encouraging, we just let them fall behind. Moses chose the timeframe for the battle, just as Abram chose when he would fight and rescue the Amalekites when he attacked Chedorlaomer at night. Moses chose when to fight. "Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill." Moses clearly had some idea of what was going to happen. He's very clear to direct all the steps that are taken, not like a general who's directing the army, it's more like he understood the symbolism or God revealed to him what he should be doing because he said he would go to the top of the hill "with the rod of God in my hand." Two things related to this, the rod was a sign of the power of God not Moses. So even though Moses is the picture of the law, it's not the law that defeats sin, even though that's the means that God gives us, we're supposed to teach them to obey all things that He has commanded. This is our responsibility, but it's not the law that gives victory, it's the power of God that gives victory. Another thing is that they saw this and related it to the generations to come. It's easier for us to understand if you're blind to the proper understanding that you just think of that rod as a token, just that they had victory because they had this vain superstition. The rod was there so we had victory, but they forget that it's the power of God. They do this with the ark, where they just take it with them like a lucky charm, if they have the ark then certainly they will be victorious. That's not the point of the rod, the point was to remember that Moses' hands grew heavy and couldn't hold them up anymore, the hand of the Lord is still stretched out. It is by His power that sin is defeated. "So Joshua did as Moses said to him." Moses commanded and Joshua went and did that, which is quite remarkable if you think about it. The people had just been complaining and saying Moses took them out there to

cause them to die of thirst, he just wanted to murder every one of them, and yet they will go out to battle for him. They are very fickle people. Joshua leads these people out to war. Remember, they were slaves. Less than two months before they were slaves and here they are organized as soldiers going to fight with the Amalekites. So Joshua did as Moses said to him "and fought with Amalek." This is what Christ is still doing, He's still fighting with Amalek. Psalm 110, the Lord said, 'Sit at My right hand until your enemies are made your footstool'. Jesus Christ is ruling now with a rod of iron and He is defeating His enemies, He's defeating sin. That's what He came to do. He's crushing the kingdoms that rebel against Him and we shouldn't be surprised if the United States isn't on that list. We should actually be surprised if it's not. We've embraced all kinds of evil and woe to those who call good evil and evil good. We should expect the woes of God because Christ is ruling the nations. Just as Joshua went to battle, Christ is going to battle. Are you going to follow Him? "And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill." It wasn't Moses alone, it was also those who were faithful and those who were fulfilling the picture. This is the first time that we hear of Hur and it's like the first time we hear of Joshua, but Hur isn't nearly as significant of a figure. Other than this passage, the other passage is when we hear it's his grandson that's the one that was skilled to do the artistic work in the temple by God. The only other time that he's mentioned is when he's left in charge with Aaron, obviously in genealogies he's mentioned, but the only other time he is mentioned as doing something is when he is left in charge with Aaron when Moses goes to the top of the hill and when they make the golden calf. So here we have the picture, the king and the priest as servants of Moses going to the top of the hill.

Verses 11-13, "And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. 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. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." "And so it was, when Moses held up his hand." There's a few theories as to why Moses held up his hand. One is so the people could see Moses so the forces would be encouraged when they saw Moses. I have trouble accepting this one because we know the full fighting force of Israel was 600,000 men. This was probably a fairly decent sized army that goes out and if you have that many people you're probably not all looking at some hill off in the distance and the other problem is that he is probably behind them because you usually don't go in front of the army or behind the competing army. I don't think it's this picture so they can see Moses. Another theory, which has more credence to me, is that Moses was in an attitude in prayer standing with his hands raised to heaven so as he stopped praying the flow of the battle shifted. I don't think that's really right either, I think it really comes down to it's the same thing that happened repeatedly in the plagues. God repeatedly tells Moses to stretch out his hand so that they see My power, stretch out your hand and cause the dust to produce boils on everybody, stretch out your hand and cause the frogs to come out. It was repeated over and over again. When Moses stretched out his hand with the rod of the Lord in it, people saw the power of God. So as his hand stopped being stretched out, they didn't see the power of God anymore, not because they are watching Moses, but because other people are watching Moses. He's supposed to write it down so that,

specifically Aaron and Hur were watching Moses, he's supposed to write it down so Joshua knows about it later and so he knows where the power and victory comes from. So when Moses held up his hand, "that Israel prevailed." When it was up Israel was beating back the Amalekites "and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed." We should recognize how quickly your army gets to be heavy if you hold it over your head. Even if the rod isn't very heavy, it's actually pretty hard to hold up your hand for a long time. We know this battle lasted all day, this is not a short battle. So they have this picture here that he's standing up there and then his hands start to drop because the rod would get heavy. Notice it says 'hand' here. I think probably if you see that the battle is going for you whenever your hand is holding up the rod and your arm is starting to get sore you start to switch hands. That's the first thing you do, switch the rod back and forth because you're trying to give your arm a break as you hold it up and then it reaches the point where he just can't hold up his arms anymore and when it fell, Amalek prevailed. Again, I think the right interpretation here, the picture, is that when the law of God is brought low, Amalek's sin reigns. We see this through history. "But Moses' hands became heavy." His arms would get heavy pretty quickly so eventually he couldn't hold up either arm because the muscles were fatigued in both. Think of Moses watching this battle and whenever his arm starts to go down he sees. It has to be pretty distinctive because it's a large group of people and off in the distance he sees Joshua advancing so he knows this is going on and you know Moses wants his people to be victorious so he's trying to hold it up but it reaches a point where he just can't hold it up anymore. One thing I think we should consider in this is that the law does give victory against sin and it's effect lasts for a while. Even when the church and state aren't holding it up, it's effective. Look at our nation, we have been blessed by incredible prosperity, we've been blessed with incredible peace, we've been blessed with incredible fruitfulness. How long ago has it been since the church stopped upholding the law of God? It's been a long time, it's been like a hundred and fifty years, but still the law continues to have an effect going forward. We've constrained sin here for far longer than most of western Christianity, but the law will only hold its position in society for so long and I just look over the last forty years and just watch how it's decaying so rapidly in our country. The law without the support from the state and the church, it gets heavy and it gets attacked and it falls. We shouldn't expect our prosperity to continue. I go to Nigeria and they say how poor they are and look at how rich the U.S. is and I say it wouldn't surprise me if in thirty years we are poorer than you are. We've lost the law of God. "So they took a stone and put it under him." Think about when his arms first get heavy, what's the first thing you think of? Why wouldn't Aaron and Hur just hold up his arms, and now you have doubled the length of time because their arms are going to get heavy exactly the same way. Instead they do something different, they lower him down on it. If this were about him being seen this would make no sense. Because if it was just about Moses being seen instead of his arms being lifted up, then him lowering down is not going to be any easier seeing him than standing up. If he lowers down, if they take a stone and sit him on it, what can he do? He can put his arms on their shoulders and the rod of God is still held up even though he is lower. How long can you stand with somebody's hand on your shoulder? You can stand to the end of the day, it doesn't become this, 'Oh my arms are so heavy, I have to put them down'. No, you can stand for a long time so they lower Moses down so that if Moses is sitting, his hands can be held up. So he sits on the rock and then the advancing and shifting all of a sudden, a lot of that would stop because his hands are going to be held up the rest of the day. "Aaron and Hur



supported his hands.” Both Aaron and Hur, pictures of the church and state are holding up Moses’ hand. They each have their own position. Remember the law is given in Exodus and Leviticus because it’s given to the priesthood, the Levites and it’s given in Deuteronomy because it’s given to the state, the Jews. As we remember that, it’s the same law, it’s not in contradiction to each other, but the applications of it and how they’re supposed to apply it are different. The same law is given because there are two sides just like this picture of Aaron holding up “one on one side, and the other on the other side.” Each side is supposed to be lifting it up. Notice the resiliency. God constrains sin if either holds up the law. If the church or the state holds it up, with Moses’ hands up, when either shines forth the light of truth, darkness flees. It’s not that hard, it’s that we fail, it’s not that it’s that hard. So neither party can say the other party isn’t holding up their part so why should I? The state said homosexuality is fine so we should rush off and apologize for our treatment of it which is exactly what happened when the Obergefell decision was made. People stumbled over themselves and the church said they were wrong in treating it this way. No, the church has to stand firm even regardless of what the state says. The state should stand firm to declare this is right and this is wrong even when the church apostasizes because God has given the responsibility to both so that sin is constrained for the law is given to constrain sin, it’s given because of transgressions. So “his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.” This is another picture, this is the battle lasted all day. It didn’t last until his hands were steady and Joshua advances and it’s over. No, it lasts all day because this is how long sin will last, it lasts from generation to generation, it doesn’t go away. It has to be fought in every generation. The final defeat of sin doesn’t happen until all of Christ’s enemies are defeated and He comes to defeat the last enemy which is death. That’s what happens at the end of the age before the New Heavens and New Earth and that’s the picture here. The battle lasted until the going down of the sun and “Joshua defeated Amalek”. At the end of the day Jesus Christ defeats sin. Joshua had the Israelite army behind him fighting against sin, but even so it’s representing saying Joshua did it. Not Joshua and the people that he chose, Joshua gets the credit because he’s the head of the army, just like Christ gets the credit because He’s the head of the church. We’re supposed to go to battle, but the glory is His. “And his people with the edge of the sword.” So he killed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Joshua fought with physical swords, but we’re supposed to fight with a spiritual sword because Christ’s kingdom is not of this world so the victory is not because of physical swords, it’s because we use a spiritual sword, we hold up the law of God and that will lead to victory at the end of the age.

Verses 14-16, “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.” And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner; for he said, “Because the Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”” “Then the Lord said to Moses.” He points this out that he’s supposed to keep a record of it and as I said before, this is the first time that anyone is commanded to record something. This is the first time, this is important. When we think of the things that went before, the covenant with Abraham, it doesn’t say to write it down, but here it says to write this down, this is an important lesson. This is an important lesson specifically for Joshua. “Write this for a

memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua.” This is another good reason to think they didn’t see this going on because why would you have to say what happened to Joshua? No, Joshua was busy fighting a battle, he wasn’t watching Moses. Joshua is specifically to have these things explained to him because God already knows they are going to rebel against Moses and not go into the Promised Land. He knows He is going to kill them all in the desert, that’s what He says in Ezekiel 20, before they left Egypt He decided to kill them all in the wilderness. So Joshua is to have these things explained to him because he’s supposed to understand so when he goes into the Promised Land, he knows how he is supposed to win the battles. It wasn’t by his strong arm, it was because they were dealing with sin which helps explain why after they defeated Ai, after Joshua says something similar to what the Israelites said which was, ‘Why did You just bring us into the Promised Land to kill us? Why didn’t we just stay on the west side of the Jordan?’ Then he falls down on his face before God. Joshua 7:10-12, “So the Lord said to Joshua: “Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you.” God says to Joshua that he didn’t deal with sin, that’s why you lost, you didn’t deal with sin. You didn’t say this is what’s righteous so you lose to Ai. God reminds Joshua of what the problem was, but I think Joshua was to have this recounted from Moses so Joshua could understand and that we can understand when we’re having defeat against the world, against the flesh and the devil, it’s because we’re not wanting God’s word, we’re not wanting to deal with sin. Then it says, “that I will utterly blot out.” God promises that they will utterly blot them out. Remember, this is one of the tribes that occupies the Promised Land. The idea in that word translated ‘blotted out’ is to rub it like an eraser, it’s like to erase it. It’s not to make it like it’s not there, he’s going to have sin there for a while and then there is a point in time where he erases sin, which is exactly what Christ will do at the second coming when He takes out all those that offend and those that practice lawlessness and casts them into the Lake of Fire. He will utterly blot out “the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.” The word ‘remembrance’ is from the same root word as the word translated ‘memorial’, which is what he was supposed to write for Joshua. That same idea is that it’s not that He’s just going to wipe out Amalek, He’s going to tear down those things that remind us of the greatness of sin. Go to Washington D.C. and a lot of those monuments are about the greatness of sin, we have a lot of memorials to the greatness of sin. We have them all over our country and God says those things are going to be destroyed, they will be rubbed out and erased. “And Moses built an altar.” This is the first time Moses built an altar. We see other people build an altar, especially in Genesis, but Moses is saying that people are supposed to remember this. He was thankful for the victory. He “called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner.” We need to understand what a banner is, it’s something you follow into battle. That’s the point of banners, and we have banners for all sorts of reasons, but the original purpose was before you had radios and how would you know which direction to go? How do you know how to fight? You follow a banner. Moses doesn’t say Joshua was the banner, he says that the Lord was the banner, the Lord was the one directing their fight, the Lord was the one that they were supposed to follow. The Lord and His commandments are what we need to

follow. "For he said, "Because the Lord has sworn." God promises this and we know it's fulfilled in Christ. God promises this, that "the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." Don't think you're not going to have to deal with sin in your generation. Don't think that somehow your children will magically not have to deal with sin, that they will just be perfect little angels. That's not how it works. Sin will be there in every generation until there are no more generations. When are there no more generations? When Christ returns and casts out all who offend, all those who practice lawlessness. When Christ returns there will be no more generations and no more sin, but until then we need to recognize every generation needs to hold up the law of God if we want sin to be defeated, if we don't want it to run rampant over the church which is what's happening now.

#### Applications:

1. Are you ashamed of the law of God? In our society it takes real work not to be because almost everybody, if you say you're not ashamed of the law of God, and I've had this happen to me in many churches, people mock you. They usually say, the favorite seems to be, "So you think witches should be put to death?" The answer is, 'Yes, because God said so.' Are you ashamed of the law of God? There's a lot of laws that are really hard to understand, but do you say they are true because God said they are true? A favorite of mine is Deuteronomy 21:18-21, "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city. And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear." Are you ashamed of that law? It's really important for us not to be ashamed of the law of God. Is that a good and righteous law? Absolutely. Christ gave that law and said it was the right thing, He said it was righteous. The law won't have power if we're ashamed of the law. Who's going to be fearful of the law of God when Christians apologize for it and Christians apologize for it all the time. There's all kinds of laws about buying people into slavery. Are you ashamed of those laws? It's a picture of the gospel, we're slaves of Christ. Are you ashamed of those laws? Don't expect the church to have victory in the world if the church is ashamed of the law of God. Should a son be killed because he is rebellious to his father? Well, that's all of history. Every single person who goes to hell because God was their Father and they wouldn't obey Him. That is the gospel, that God in His mercy takes them and adopts them and makes them obey Him so that they're saved.
2. Your relationship with the law indicates your relationship with the Law-giver. If you're ashamed of the law you're ashamed of the Law-giver. If you think the law is cruel, you think God is cruel. If you don't see mercy in the law, you don't see mercy in God. This is what God commanded, you cannot say that God is loving and the law is not loving. You cannot say God is merciful and the law is not merciful. You cannot say God is just and

say the law is not just. What you think of the law is what you think of the Law-giver. The church wants to say this is who Christ is, Christ is love, not like that mean God of the Old Testament. Are we surprised that as a nation we don't want to retain God in our knowledge, which we know based on the things happening here, we do not want to retain God in our knowledge. If you don't like the law you don't like the Law-giver so you don't want to retain God in your knowledge. That's where we are as a nation, what's your relationship to the law? If you don't like the law you don't like the One who gave it. 'Oh how I love Thy law, it's my meditation day and night.' That's what a man after God's own heart says.

3. We should consider our responsibility to be declaring the law to the world around us. We are priests of God. Every believer in the New Covenant is a priest of the order of Melchizedek and as priests we have responsibilities to uphold God's law. The declaration of the law is how sin is constrained in the world. It was added because of transgression. When you look at the world around you, do you speak to what God says of those things? We have a duty to declare those things.
4. Are you prepared to face attacks for desiring to live godly in Christ Jesus? That's what happened to Israel even though they weren't desiring to live godly, they were a picture and they got attacked because they were a picture. Understand how much more we are attacked when it's real. We need to expect this to be normal, we need to expect persecution to be normal, especially in a world that's so adrift from reality, so adrift from the reality of who God is. We need to understand that we should expect those attacks and that means we have to put on the full armor of God, we have to be prepared to defend ourselves because the attacks are going to come. If we try to expand His kingdom, that attacks are going to come. Even as we think of the things going on in Nigeria and the opportunities God has opened there, we should expect that to result in real attacks here. I've seen this lots of times. That should be our expectation, are you prepared for attacks? Are we coming alongside one another? Are we spending the time in the meeting of the church like we should, to exhort one another to love and good works? Is this what we are doing? This is how we prepare. Are we prepared to face attacks?
5. Make sure that you're being diligent to exhort to love and good works. The Amalekites attacked the stragglers, they attacked the ones that were separate, they attacked the ones that were tired and weak. How do we treat the ones that are tired and weak in this church? When we see someone suffering, do we come alongside them and encourage them, exhort them, and rebuke them when appropriate? Do we actually deal with sin? We shouldn't expect to have victory in expanding the church of God if we won't deal with sin in the congregation. Do you remember how Amalek attacked the weak and the strangers? It's obvious when you have a relatively weak enemy, that's how you have to attack, it's guerilla warfare. We've seen this over and over again. The weaker army attacks the stronger army using guerilla warfare, that's the history of the world. So understand the picture, the Amalekites were the weaker. We want to think the world is stronger, no, the world is not stronger than the church of Jesus Christ. Satan is not stronger than that Holy Spirit. Satan is a slave of the Holy Spirit, he's not stronger. We

fight against a relatively weak enemy. The reason we fall is because we don't want to keep our eyes on God, we don't want to keep our eyes on Christ. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Think of the ones you should be encouraging today, think of the ones you should be coming alongside today. Let's use the meeting of the church for the purpose that God gave it, the purpose He commands. Don't forsake the assembling of yourself together. How many times in church discipline cases, where someone is facing excommunication for serious sins and you think, 'Yeah, I never confronted him about that. It didn't warrant excommunication, but do we let the stragglers be taken? Let's make sure we don't do that, let's deal with small sins so we don't have to deal with big sins. We have the responsibility to protect the weak, we have the responsibility to protect those that are tired and weary.

6. Even though it's God that gives victory, don't think that we don't have real responsibilities. The victory was all about whether Moses had his hands up or not. Victory or defeat, it was all about whether or not Moses had his hands up. Either way Joshua had to go fight, victory was the Lord's, but Joshua had the duty to go fight. Now, it wasn't like at the Red Sea, which is the picture of justification where they are told to just be still and watch and see what the Lord does. Justification is completely God. In sanctification, the picture of going through the wilderness is completely God, but we are supposed to do things. We're supposed to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, not taking any glory to ourselves because of it because it's God who works in us to cause us to do His good pleasure. Remember we have real responsibilities. Joshua had the duty to fight, we have the duty to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. We need to go out and war against sin in ourselves, war against sin in the church, war against sin in this local body, in the broader church, in society. We have a real duty to do the fight. We know the gates of hell will not prevail against the church of Jesus Christ, but that doesn't mean the church doesn't go fight. We have to fight. God grants the victory, but we have a duty to fight.
7. Do you see how obvious it is in the world when the law is held up? It happens in society, just look. You look at the 1800's and almost every family in this country read the Bible in the morning and look at what happened to this country after that and look at what happens in this country now. It should be obvious to us when the law of God is held up versus when the law of God is despised, inside and outside of the church. It's really obvious if you look at statistics. 1963, the Bible was banned from schools to use for religious instruction in public schools. If you chart things afterwards, like the level of fornication, the level of theft, there's all kinds of numbers and statistics and an inflection point and that inflection point is when the Bible's were taken out of schools. The teachers having them read the Bible, it's not like they were Christians or instructing them, the Word of God actually has power because God gives it power. If you remove the law, sin runs rampant. We need to just recognize, it should be obvious to us, just like it was obvious to Moses, Aaron, and Hur when his arms were going down the Amalekites were victorious. We should see that and see how obvious that is because that is obviously true if we would just look. The church started to say, 'No rules, just relationship', and that's how you get the country we have.

8. Dispensational view of eschatology basically says that it's up to us and it's not God that's going to give victory. The dispensational view of eschatology says it is God who is sinning because we're not dealing with sin so we're just going to get defeated and sin is going to get worse and worse and worse instead of saying it's our fault. God promises victory, it's our fault why we're in this season that we're in. The church is being defeated, not because God has some problem. The church is being defeated because we have a problem, because God has given us the weapons to win and we refuse to use them. That's why the church is being defeated. Dispensationalism says God allows things to get worse and worse and worse. No, He says the opposite, He says if you uphold His law, you will have victory over sin. It was interesting as we read the SLBC about the perseverance of the saints, that it talks about how in a Christian's life the same picture goes on, where at some times the Amalekites were victorious and there are times where you are pushing back sin in your life. There are times when gloom comes on, clouds come in, and there are times where you see what you should be doing. Individually let us remember in those times to go to God, go to the law of God and see what God says. That's what we're supposed to do when we're struggling with sin in our lives.
9. Don't value compromise with sin. That's the lesson of 1 Samuel 15. Saul said Agog looks good and he lost the kingdom because of it. Instead we're supposed to be like Moses who kept holding it up, kept saying we want to defeat sin. Sin will be defeated, it will be removed from this world. Yes, it will only be removed when Christ comes, but we are to be fighting against it now. Never make a compromise with sin because it will always lead to destruction.
10. Jehovah is my banner; this is what the church needs to say. Too often the church says Calvin is my banner or Wesley is my banner or the pastor is my banner. No, Jehovah should be our banner. We're all supposed to follow Jehovah, that's how we have victory. He's supposed to be the one that leads us into battle and that doesn't mean He doesn't put us in churches or give us leaders that should be faithful, but in the end it has to be that Jehovah is our banner. Going to Nigeria, over there it's 'Unity, unity, it doesn't matter who you are, we're all just supposed to be unified'. That's throwing the idea that Jehovah is our banner down on the ground because you're saying you don't care who Jehovah is. Victory comes when we say we care who Jehovah is, it matters that His glory is that He will show mercy to who He shows mercy. These things really matter, they really have a tremendous impact and if we're following a banner that is not Jehovah, in the end it's not Jehovah that's going to get victory. Jehovah is the One who will be victorious, make sure you follow Jehovah.

Let me close us in prayer. Oh Lord God, I do thank You for this passage. We thank You for what You're taking us through in Exodus. Lord we have so much to learn in so many things that You have given us so we can know them and understand them. We pray that we rightly apply these verses, that we rightly apply them to our lives, that we don't just hear them and ignore them for You said to write these things as a memorial. We're supposed to remember these things because these things are important. Let us take them to heart and let us learn the lessons from them and obey so that Your kingdom expands for Your name's sake. Amen.