

Prayer: Communicating with The Father Series: 4

Lessons From The Prayer of Moses

Exodus 17.8-16

Although this is an account of a battle that took place against the Amalekites and not actually a prayer itself, it is most commonly agreed that the actions of Moses are symbolic and contain much teaching on prayer.

Let us first look at the typology of this account and then afterwards the lessons we can learn.

Typology

- Moses **outstretched arms** – symbolic of prayer
“I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting”
1 Timothy 2.8

The lifting up of hands was always a sign of prayer. The ancients believed that it was forbidden for a man to lift up his hands above, except in prayer, and supplications, and in blessings to his Lord.

“But Abram said to the king of Sodom, ‘I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth’” Genesis 14.22

“When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood” Isaiah 1.15

“Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully” Psalm 24.3-4

see also: Psalm 68.31; Exodus 9.29,33; 1 Kings 8.22; 2 Chronicles 6.12-13

- **Amalekites** – symbolic of the enemy who comes out against us
 - The Amalekites were from the family of Esau - Esau hated his brother Jacob because of the birthright and blessing.
 - This enmity ran from generation to generation
 - The devil comes out against us because of his enmity with God – he cannot touch God so he comes after us“Be sober [self controlled], be vigilant [watchful]; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” 1 Peter 5.8
- **Rod** in Moses hand – symbolic of the power and presence of God
 - Summoned the plagues in Egypt – Exodus 7.9-12, 19-20; Exodus 8.5-6, 16-17; Exodus 9.23; Exodus 10.13
 - Parting of the red sea – Exodus 14.16
 - Water from the rock – Numbers 20.11

The raised rod would encourage those in the battle to know that God was with them, fighting for them – they would see the rod from the valley and fight on.

It is important for us to remember past victories and answers to prayer as an encouragement for our faith

Isaiah (11.1) prophesied that a Rod would come out of Jesse – this Rod would utterly defeat the enemy and bring victory for all of the children of God. Of course this speaking of Jesus and He did that through His death on the cross.

Jesus was the raised Rod –

- raised on the cross,
- brought our victory through His blood -
- we have peace with God through Jesus – God is with us
“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.” This He said, signifying by what death He would die” John 12.32-33

Lessons from Moses

- Prayer for front-line workers
 - Moses prayed while Joshua fought in the battle against the enemy
- Encouragement
 - The raised rod encouraged those in battle – the symbol of past victories and blessings, and the presence of God
- Effective fervent praying
 - While ever Moses hands were raised they were winning the battle
 - When Moses let down his hands the enemy began to win.
 - This shows us the importance of persisting and persevering in prayer.
- Others help provide prayer support
 - Aaron and Hur supported the arms of Moses when they became heavy – the more people that pray help keep the hands raised.
 - Steadiness of hands - Steadfast in faith

God revealed Himself to Moses through one of His covenant names:

Jehovah Nissi – The Lord Is My Banner (Exodus 17.15)

The rod raised was symbolic of an army banner under which the army fought. While the banner was raised the armies fought.

- This is a military reference – the raised standard was the signal to go into battle. It was carried by a cavalry soldier. A lowered standard would signal surrender or end of battle.
- Prayer is the Lord's banner under which we wage warfare in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6.12, 18). We use the weapons of our warfare under the banner of all prayer and supplication in the Spirit

You may have seen the tourists following the raised banner of the party leader

The Lord is My Banner – His presence, His protection and help

- The Lord is My Miracle – an alternative definition of Jehovah Nissi according to ‘*John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*’