

God's Plans for Mutual Support

Exodus 17:8-18:27

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Pastor Gary Hollinger

Even the greatest of individuals will grow weary and need the support of others.

- I. The Amalekites were nomadic descendants of Esau (Isaac's rejected-by-God son). (v. 17:8)**
- II. The staff represented dependence upon God and His power for victory. (v. 17:9)**
- III. Moses was not strong enough to provide this spiritual assistance by himself. (v. 17:10-13)**

Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing. (1 Timothy 2:8)

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. (Ephesians 6:18)

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience... (Colossians 1:9-11)

...because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. (Hebrews 7:24-25)

- IV. God ordained the victory be memorialized. (v. 17:14-16)**

This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy [a term that meant the giving over to God] all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.'" (1 Samuel 15:2-3)

He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves^[b] and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed. (1 Samuel 15:8-9)

Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and attacked all who were lagging behind [typically women and children]: they had no fear of God. When the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget! (Deuteronomy 25:17-19)

With cunning they conspire against your people;
they plot against those you cherish.
“Come,” they say, “let us destroy them as a nation,
so that Israel’s name is remembered no more.” (Psalm 83:3-4)

V. While Moses dealt with Egypt, he protected his family by sending them to stay with his father-in-law. (v. 18:1-3a)

VI. Like many biblical characters, the names of Moses sons had significance. (v. 18:3b-7)

VII. Moses’ testimony of Yahweh’s faithfulness brought Jethro to faith. (v. 18:8-11)

VIII. The shared meal was a covenantal joining in alliance of the Israelites, these Midianites and the Lord. (v. 18:12)

IX. Moses had overburdened himself by taking personal responsibility for the needs of the people. (v. 18:13-18)

X. Jethro acknowledged Moses’ unique role but wisely counseled that the workload should be shared with other godly men. (v. 18:19-27)

- 1. Capable (native aptitude for wisdom/judging)**
- 2. God Fearing (reverence/belief)**
- 3. Trustworthy (lit. Men of Truth)**
- 4. Haters of Dishonest Gain**

One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: (Luke 6:12-13)

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. (Luke 10:1-3)

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” (Acts 6:1-4)

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:1-2)

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. (Titus 1:5-9)

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap. In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons...A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3:1-12)