

IN HIS HANDS

Exodus 17:8-15

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades
July 3, 2011 ♦ Sunday Morning Worship

Introduction:

Tomorrow we celebrate our freedom, Liberty as Americans. FLAG is a banner that we wave in honor of the victories won, inspiration to continue the fight for liberty and justice, in this country and abroad. Celebrating FREEDOM we have. Praising God for the sacrifices made to secure and sustain our freedom. Ill. Our neighbor from Iran (Muslim upbringing) told us she loves it when we fly the flag, greatest country on earth. She will not tolerate anyone speaking disparagingly of her new home. TOMORROW. Today, we celebrate freedom we have because of the sacrifice Jesus made on the CROSS.

Gal 5:1 *"It was for freedom that Christ set us free, so do not submit yourselves again to a yoke of slavery."*

Please open your Bibles to Exodus 17. Page 52.

- In bondage they looked around no one to help, looked up and God sent a deliverer. In His hands ...
- Trapped at Red Sea with no way out, Moses raised staff and the sea parted. In His hands ...
- When the waters were bitter, prayed to God and bitter waters sweet. In His hands ...
- As souls grew faint/thirsty, God rained down bread from heaven and water from rock. In His hands ...

Now they confront their first enemy ... DISCOVER THAT THEY ARE STILL IN HIS HANDS.

Read Exodus 17:8-1

Introduced to two men ... Joshua, leader (General) chosen by God to defeat enemies, take wanderers into the land of promise. We will hear of him again and again, a book of the Bible named after him. His name means JEHOVAH IS SALVATION, Jesus YESHUA = Jehovah is salvation. But the other man we meet is named Hur ... though his name will be mentioned again in passing. Here we find him stepping out of nowhere, doing great work (essential), disappearing into the shadows. Ill. excited when in my preparation one sermonizer said that the name HUR literally meant LIBERTY. Hebrew dictionary ... not only did it not mean LIBERTY, it means HOLE. The guy was really a nobody, that God raised up to assist Moses.

HANDS UP, they were winning. HANDS DOWN, they were losing. Many interpretations ...

- 1) Psychological connection between the what's on the hill and what's happening on the battlefield. BATTLE SCENES WHERE BRAVE SOLDIER LIFTS THE FLAG AND CHARGES INTO THE ONCOMING.
- 2) Christ in the Exodus ... Moses deliverer, Jesus deliverer ... Moses lifting up staff, Jesus lifted up on cross. Aaron and Hur on either side, the two thieves on either side. Just doesn't work for me.
- 3) Christ in the Exodus ... Picture of the resurrected Christ, lives to make intercession for us. Came to transform world with presence, now transforming world with prayers. Lifting us up to the Father.

Romans 8:34 *Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

JESUS IS INTERCEDING FOR US ... right now. Lifting us up to the Father.

HOLY SPIRIT IS INTERCEDING FOR US ... right now. Even when we don't know how to pray, Spirit does **Romans 8:26,27** *²⁶In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.*

When in BATTLE ... reach up to God in prayer.

QUOTE *“Raised hands have been regarded with unvarying unanimity by Targumists, Rabbis, Fathers, Reformers and modern experts as the sign of prayer.”*

Raising hands in prayer is recognition that the battle belongs to the Lord; it is in His hands. Without His help, no victory, sure defeat.

Psalms 121:1 ¹ *I lift up my eyes to the hills— where does my help come from?* ² *My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

HAND UP WINNING, HANDS DOWN LOSING.

The real battle is being fought on the hill ... in the stadium seat, Moses skybox.

War was a way of life in the ANE, no different today.

Our enemies? THE AMALEKITES? Not those who disagree with us, or those who are not like us. Our enemies are much more subtle (temptations come from within, war with flesh) yet just as deadly. Most of the time, not fight against, but fight for. STILL HAVE TO FIGHT.

Purity, obedience, connection, parenting, career, marriage, church ... fight to keep heart alive to God.

The BATTLE belongs to the Lord. God is our champion.

Romans 8:31 ³¹ *What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?*

Believers caught in battle know where victory comes from. Put the battle in God's hands.

Believers caught in battle know where victory comes from. They put the LEADER in God's hands

When in BATTLE ... lift your leaders up to God in prayer. Our role is to pray for leaders. Obama, Brown, ministry staff, Elders, Small Group leaders.

Leaders grow weary ... like you, they can get tired; even tired of praying.

Ill. Susie and I had a big fight, resolving matters. Let's pray. She started, and I leaned my head back, it had been a long week, a long day, it was late and I was exhausted.

Like the disciples in Gethsemane ... Jesus agonizing, they slept ...

Who do you have praying for you? Are you willing to ask others to pray for you? Who would you call? If you don't have others praying for you, you are missing out on the blessing that comes through the power of intercessory prayer.

Ill. Fred Hartley ... dad asked Fred to pray for him. I asked my daughter to pray for me on Friday.

Ill. Lillie Babbitt aka. Mama "B" ... lost a powerful intercessor. She is still interceding.

Ill. Tough times ... some were mad. Why didn't you tell us, we would have prayed. My response, "you should have been praying anyway."

I need your prayers. Nations leaders need our prayers. If Moses put the battle in God's hands, if Jesus is interceding right now, if the HS is praying on our behalf ... so must we.

Conclusion:

Tomorrow, celebrating the Liberty and freedom we have as Americans. Best place on earth.

Today, celebrating the Liberty and freedom we have through Jesus Christ.

In a battle (and if you don't think you are then you have already lost), in desperate need of help.

WILL YOU PUT YOUR LIFE, YOUR STRUGGLES, YOUR BATTLES IN GOD'S HANDS?

God sent Jesus to live and die, to be resurrected and seated to make intercession.

Not a flag, not just the cross, but a table. Bread and cup, body and blood. Sacrifice. FREEDOM / LIBERTY.