

Israel Defeats the Amalekites

8 While the people of Israel were still at Rephidim, the warriors of Amalek attacked them. **9** Moses commanded Joshua, "Choose some men to go out and fight the army of Amalek for us. Tomorrow, I will stand at the top of the hill, holding the staff of God in my hand."

10 So Joshua did what Moses had commanded and fought the army of Amalek. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of a nearby hill. **11** As long as Moses held up the staff in his hand, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he dropped his hand, the Amalekites gained the advantage. **12** Moses' arms soon became so tired he could no longer hold them up. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side of Moses, holding up his hands. So his hands held steady until sunset. **13** As a result, Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle.

14 After the victory, the LORD instructed Moses, "Write this down on a scroll as a permanent reminder, and read it aloud to Joshua: I will erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven." **15** Moses built an altar there and named it Yahweh-Nissi (which means "the LORD is my banner"). **16** He said, "They have raised their fist against the LORD's throne, so now the LORD will be at war with Amalek generation after generation."

Exodus 17:8-16 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- What's one of the biggest struggles/challenges that you have faced in life? What things did you learn (or are learning) through that struggle?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

v.8-16

- O: Moses' staff was a representation of the LORD being the Israelites' banner (exod.4:5). It reminded them that God was to be the main focus of their lives and their priorities. With that background, how does this story come to life?
 - Also, discuss the calling for Israel to go and fight, yet the paradigm that they still have no power apart from God.
- I: Discuss the response Moses did after the battle (v.14-15), and specifically the name given to God (what do you think/feel about this name)?
 - In what ways does "the LORD is my banner" impact you?
Follow-up: How has focusing on God helped you through difficulties in your life?
 - * How have you seen joy brought into your life as a result of focusing on God?
- A: The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites, and as a result, became a temporary roadblock in their overall journey. Do you have any "Amalekites" in your own life that act like roadblocks in your overall journey of following Jesus?
 - What keeps you from keeping your eyes focused on Jesus?
 - What in your life tends to become a priority over God at times?
 - * How can you prevent these things from becoming your main priorities?
 - * What are ways that you can overcome these areas – that is, focusing on God as your Banner?
 - * Read John 16:33. How does what Jesus said bring hope into these obstacles? (also Exod.17:16)
- A: Read through verses 12 and 13. Moses, while growing tired and weak, was able to continue on because of the help of Aaron and Hur. Do you have people like Aaron and Hur in your life, people that can come to your side and support you?
Follow-up: How have these people helped you get through difficult times in your life?
Note: Keith stated that it is not good for us to be "lone rangers" and used the coal story as an illustration of why community is important. Any thoughts on that?
Follow-up: What are ways that we can support one another as a family of faith/home group?
 - o As a family of faith, what practical ways that we can help each other?

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word."