



CROSS OVER

SERMON
NOTES



VINTAGE PRESS

Cross Over

Exodus 17:8–16

The previous three stories we have covered in the Exodus narrative are a collective. Each story deals with the newly redeemed Israelites undergoing a test in the wilderness on their way to Mt. Sinai. This raises an interesting question, “What does it mean for YHWH ‘to test’ his covenant people?” As a church, we are learning these tests have nothing to do with God tempting his people to sin. Rather, these tests have everything to do with teaching his people trust and dependence upon him for provision. This heavenly provision starts with meeting their most basic human needs of food and water. YHWH provides life for his people, in the giving of daily food and water, in the middle of an arid desert.

As the people continue their march toward Mt. Sinai through the desert wilderness, they will once again be tested but not by YHWH. This time the test will come from their enemies—the Amalekites. Will the people and its leaders trust YHWH to fight for them? As Pastor Dustin taught us on Sunday, the LORD fights for his people when the Enemy attacks. He is the power behind their victories. In return, they are called to consistently recount these victories, both individually and collectively, as a means of reinforcing their faith and trust in YHWH for the future battles that lie ahead.

- As you reflect on the message, what stood out to you? What is something you’re still thinking about?
- What is something from the message that challenged you? How are you wrestling with that challenge?
- What question(s) do you have from the message?
- What is at least one practical takeaway for you from the message?

Scripture reading: Exodus 17:8 – 16

⁸ Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. ⁹ So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” ¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹² But Moses’ hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. ¹³ And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.

¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under

heaven.” ¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD Is My Banner, ¹⁶ saying, “A hand upon the throne of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

Questions:

- As they draw closer to Mount Sinai, the Israelites are attacked by their relatives, the Amalekites. Unfortunately, this will not be the last time. The Amalekites become the perpetual enemy of YHWH’s covenant people in the Old Testament. Why is it important for us as God’s people:
 - to be aware that we have real enemies in this life bent on our destruction?
 - to acknowledge that we are vulnerable to attacks by our enemies?
 - to understand that God—and by extension us—will always have enemies in this world?
- The physical battle in this story is a manifestation of a greater spiritual battle being waged against YHWH’s covenant people. Read Ephesians 6:12 and 1 Peter 5:8-9
 - How do the apostles Paul and Peter explain this reality? Should this reality change how we view other image bearers, especially those who have committed evil against us?
 - Have you ever been under spiritual attack? Describe what that experience was like.
- In Deuteronomy 25, Moses recounts the Amalekites’ attack. Read Deuteronomy 25:17-19. What lessons can we learn from these verses concerning how our spiritual enemies like to attack us?
- For Joshua, Moses calls on him to engage the Amalekites in battle. In his instructions, Moses intentionally mentions the staff of God. How had God previously built trust in Joshua? How does that trust steady him for the battle ahead?
 - What spiritual battle(s) are you currently facing? How can you apply Joshua’s example to your own present battle?
- For the first time as leader of the people, Moses shows signs of weakness or limitations in his abilities. Up to this point in the Exodus narrative, he’s been like a superhero! Moving forward, Moses will need others, like Aaron and Hur, to help strengthen him. Who do you have in your life that could ‘hold your hands up’? Whose hands could you ‘hold up’?
- How could your vGroup and/or Formation Group play a role in strengthening you during your current season of life and vice versa?

- The scroll of remembrance first serves as a memorial for the people, calling on both the present and future generations of Israelites to remember YHWH's victory on their behalf as well as to remind them that they have a common, ancestral enemy. In your life, what spiritual victories has Jesus won for you in the past? Briefly talk about those experiences.
 - What is the value in consistently recalling and talking about Jesus' ultimate on the cross over sin, death, and hell?
- The scroll of remembrance was also for Joshua. Joshua will face more battles in the decades to come against more of YHWH's enemies. If dwelt on and recalled, how do the Lord's past victories in our lives prepare us for future battles that we will surely face?
- YHWH is Our Banner. This becomes part of the revelation of YHWH's character in the Exodus narrative. He fights for his people and to rid his good world of the evil powers waging war on it. This is who YHWH is and what he will always do! How can you place your trust in this aspect of God's character this week?