

The Lord Is My Banner

Exodus 17

by Don Falkos

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The people of Israel went from place to place, moving whenever the Lord told them to. When they ended up camping at a place that had no water, they complained to Moses vehemently. Moses cried out to the Lord, "What am I to do with these people? They're ready to kill me!"

The Lord said to Moses, "Take the leaders of Israel and go out ahead of the people. When you reach Mount Sinai, I will show you a rock, which you are to strike with your staff. Water will come out of the rock for the people to drink." As the leaders of Israel watched, Moses struck the rock and water poured out.

The Amalekites attacked the people of Israel. At Moses' command, Joshua chose some men and engaged in battle. Moses went to the top of a nearby hill to watch. He raised his arms, holding his staff above his head. As long as Moses held up his staff, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he lowered his arms, the Amalekites gained the advantage.

Moses' arms grew tired. He couldn't hold them up any longer. So he sat down on a stone, while Aaron and Hur stood on either side of him holding up his arms so his hands remained steady. His staff was raised until the sun went down. As a result, Joshua defeated the Amalekites.

The Lord instructed Moses, "Write down an account of this battle, read it to Joshua, and make sure it gets passed on to future generations." Moses then built an altar and named it "The Lord Is My Banner" – the banner under which Israel had fought and won.