

8063U

KAMLOOPS STUDY WEEKEND - 2006

CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS

Speaker: Bro. Jim Cowie

Study #4: War with Amalek

Reading: Exodus 17:8-16

Well then, brethren and sisters and young people, I began my study this afternoon by saying that over the years we've been made to feel pretty much at home at Kamloops, and that is certainly the case. I feel even more at home today because sitting at the back of the hall, there is brother Roland and sister Janelle Kilgus and their sons Ben and Luke are somewhere amongst us as well, who are visiting Canada because their son, Michael was married a week or two ago over in Ontario. It's nice to have people from your own ecclesia this far from home. Brother Wayne came to me after the session and said, 'How do you prove the rod in Numbers 20 is a reference to Aaron's rod that budded?' We'll come to that in a moment, most of you will be aware that sister Pam has been a little unwell, but she's come back from the doctor this morning with a report from the doctor which said, she's only got an allergy and she got that, of course, the day that I arrived, so I'm beginning to put two and two together! Brother Mike, of course, is not that well, and our prayers and thoughts are with him, as he's in hospital at the moment.

Let's just have a quick look by way of a post script, because you might have noticed that I was looking at that clock to make sure you had a decent break between my sessions, so I was trying to be merciful upon you! But in Numbers 20 we read there just to clear up that matter of the rod of Aaron where it says there in the 9th verse, 'Moses took the rod from before Yahweh, as He commanded him', if you've got the same bible as I've got you'll notice that it actually directs you to Numbers 17 verse 10, and in that verse it says, 'Yahweh said unto Moses, bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels', and of course, that's very much akin to what happens, isn't it? in chapter 20, because Moses says 'hear now, ye rebels' and he's got the rod of Aaron in his hand and 'it was put before the testimony of Yahweh to be kept for a token against the rebels, and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from Me'. There's no doubt that the rod used in Numbers 20 was Aaron's rod that budded, although there may be some doubt as to which rod it was that Moses struck the rock with twice.

So we come back now to Exodus 17, we want to finish off the balance of this chapter which has just been read for us, and many of you will have heard me speak about this

before, and some of you won't have heard, so I'm going to slip through this because it tells us a lot about the work of Christ. Let's just review where we are:

We've been talking in our studies about Israel's movements through the wilderness (Slide 2). The first study was on Marah and Elim in chapter 15; we then came to chapter 16 and the Red Sea and the wilderness of Sin, and now we're coming to this area, in fact, we've come in this area to Rephidim and we're going to see, the relationship of these places; not so much about Alush, I won't be saying much about it, but I want to say something about Dophkah in a moment; but we are at Rephidim now, when the events of chapter 17 unfold. Israel has come down to this area of the wilderness and it's to play a crucial role, in their wanderings in the wilderness. The platform is laid, the basis of the principles that are to govern their wilderness wanderings are laid in this place; and we're going to see a lot in this section, verses 8 to 16 of Exodus 17, about the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the scriptures don't say much about that place, Dophkah (1850) to which they came. Numbers 33 spells out the 42 stations that Israel took in their 40 years of wanderings, and Dophkah was one of them. Dophkah means 'to knock, by analogy to 'press something severely' and Strong's tells us it is rendered variously in the Old Testament, 'beat, or knock, or overdrive in Genesis 33 verse 13. At Dophkah there is evidence today, they found this, there was an extensive mine of the Egyptians for copper and turquoise. In fact, inscriptions have shown that they took prisoners to work in the mines; noblemen, slaves, people who were innocent or guilty, it didn't matter, women or children were driven underground to work on these mines. 750 Egyptian soldiers guarded the entrances to the mines and there was no way of release except by death; once you got into the mines at Dophkah, the only way you got out was on a stretcher, they took you out dead. Now it is said, and we have got no evidence at all in the bible, but it is said by Jewish tradition, that Joshua was one of the slaves in the mines at Dophkah. Inscriptions actually tell how the work in these mines were suddenly stopped at the time of the exodus and the question arises, did Israel release their brethren at Dophkah? Well, we don't know, but this we do know, that up until the record of Exodus 17 verse 9, we read nothing about Joshua, he suddenly bursts upon the scene here in this chapter. I think that's significant, there may be something in that, and may be there's nothing, but one thing is certain, Joshua has made no entrance until the record of verse 9. We're going to see that that's highly significant, we know who he represents in the scheme of things.

But first of all, let's find out what kind of territory it is that we're in now as we march with Israel. We are in Amalek country, you notice I don't say, 'the country of the Amalekites'. We say **Amalek** because that's the way the scripture presents it here, that's what verse 8 tells us, 'then came Amalek'. Then in verse 9, Joshua is told to fight with Amalek. He was actually fighting with the nation; many people, Amalekites, but they're not called Amalekites, they're called Amalek (6002), they are seen as one man, one power, and that's what Yahweh wants us to understand about this record, because we're going to find that Amalek actually represents the 'serpent', the serpent of Genesis 3 verse 15. Now this is the kind of country through which Israel was passing (slide #4) as they

made their way towards Horeb, this is Amalek country! This is the kind of terrain through which they went, and in a moment we'll come to Deuteronomy 25 because it was in this place that Amalek began the process of cutting off, those who straggled behind the main body of Israel. They weren't organized yet but Israel came through here, they weren't organized like they were when they left Sinai some time later. When they left Sinai they marched in a certain order, do you know who was the last tribe in that order? We're told in Numbers 10 that it was Naphtali and Naphtali means 'my wrestling' (5321). Now as I said, that order didn't exist here but the principle did! the principle was this, that some of the ecclesia making their way towards the kingdom of God, straggled behind the main body. They were wrestling alright, and they were losing the battle, they were dragging their feet on the way to the kingdom and the Amalekites came and cut their throats and took away what they had and they lay in the wilderness perishing beneath the burning sun. That was their end! and it was so highly typical of what is so tragically happening still today. We are losing people to Amalek because they get behind the main bunch; have you seen this happen in your ecclesia? I don't know a lot about your ecclesia, I can't talk about your ecclesia, I can talk about my own, and I can talk about other ecclesias that I know well in Australia, and there are some sad tragic things happening! People stop for whatever reason, they stop coming to the meetings, or adequate meetings. What are they doing? Well, we find out later what they're doing! They're hanging around with Amalekites, who eventually cut their throats and you don't see them any more in the main body of the ecclesia. They're gone! Amalek has successfully overwhelmed them. That's the story!

Now I want you to come to Deuteronomy 25, we want to see who this power, Amalek, represents. We're going to spend a bit of time on this, Deuteronomy 25 verses 17 to 19, and here we read, 'Remember what Amalek did unto thee **by the way**' (1870) (notice that phrase, it's used again in verse 18 and it's worth highlighting) 'by the way', what way? Well, it's a bit like Deuteronomy 8, 'remember all the way in which you walked for 40 years', the **way** referred to here is the time of probation, it's the way to the kingdom. That's where we are right now, b&s and young people, so God says to Israel at the end of their wanderings through Moses, He says, 'remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way (during your probation, you were about to cross into the land (into the kingdom of God, that means to us) when you came forth out of Egypt; how he met you by the way (during your probation) and he smote the hindmost of thee; even all that were feeble behind thee'. Now you'll see these words on the screen (slide #5): the **hindmost** (2179) that is, those who fell behind the main body; the **feeble** (2826 - chashal) it means to be 'unsteady or weak'; the **faint** (5889) which means to be 'languid' in which you seem to have no strength and the feet don't want to go where you want them to go; that's the kind of thing he's talking about, people who become weary or tired with the way. Amalek picked them off, one by one! and he's still doing the same today, because we're going to see that Amalek represents the serpent power, the serpent of Genesis 3 verse 15, and the serpent is what's doing the picking off. We're going to find something very interesting about this context.

I want you to cast your eyes a bit earlier in this chapter, to verses 13 to 16. Now when

you read this context through Deuteronomy 24, 25 and 26, it's a whole list of sundry items that are just put in here by God, not without order and not without purpose. What is it that proceeds this little record about what Amalek did? Have a look at verse 13, 'Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights of a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small' (in other words, it's talking about honesty in business dealings or transactions). 'But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have, that thy days might be lengthened in the Land which Yahweh thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto Yahweh thy God'. Now that doesn't sound like it has any relationship to Amalek, does it? On first glance you would say, 'well, that's just a sundry law about being honest in your dealings', well, it is! But it's put there just before the account on Amalek because verses 13 to 16 are highlighting why people are dishonest, why you would use unjust weights. Why do you do that? why do you want to trick people and get more money than what you should get? why do you do that? because of self interest, that's why! and we're going to see that Amalek represents as Paul rightly said the other night, human self interest! That's why it's in that context! and God as He's going through these sundry laws given them through Moses, He then immediately puts in this little passage about Amalek; because Amalek who represents the serpent, represents **human self interest** that gets in the way of people making the kingdom of God. If I'm not in the kingdom of God, I'll tell you why I won't be there - it won't be because God didn't provide me with every opportunity and every means to be there; He cannot do any more than what He's done! It will be because my nature gets in the way; it'll be because I will start to live life for what this life can offer, to please #1, human self interest will be the barrier between me and eternal life, the same goes for all of us. So Amalek is going to represent that, which we'll see when we get back to Exodus 17 in a moment.

Let's have a look at Deuteronomy 25 verse 19. So Amalek cut off the weary and the feeble and in verse 19 God says this, 'Therefore it shall be when Yahweh thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the Land which Yahweh thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven (that prefigures the destruction of sin at the end of the millennium) 'thou shalt **not forget it**'. In other words, it's possible to forget it, it's possible to see! but self interest gets in the way; so Yahweh was very concerned about Israel's future because so many of them had fallen to Amalek in the wilderness.

So **war with Amalek!** as we step back now to Exodus 17, war with Amalek has got a lot of lessons personally for us, but also this context is going to tell us a lot about the work of our Lord Jesus Christ who came to destroy the 'serpent power'. Now while you're turning back to Exodus 17, I just want to bring to your attention this passage from brother Barling in Law and Grace, this is what he says about 'war with Amalek'.

'The significance of God's quarrel with Amalek was for all time. 'Write this for a memorial in a book', but its effect would be the obliteration of Amalek; as such. 'thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven'. It was a poor Israelite

who failed to see more than the obvious literal meaning in this contrast and miss the symbolical sense of the term 'Amalek'. Do you see how he's picked up on that term? The law here, if only he could see it, was presenting a challenge to him, to wage a relentless war against sin in himself; and all about him, a war so relentless that sin would in the process be annihilated'.

Now do you see how brother Barling has put his finger right on the issues of this chapter. We can be very thankful for that! it is a matter of very personal concern to each one of us.

Amalek, well, we meet him there in verse 8. He's the first nation that fights against Israel, the first nation to appear in their history in their wilderness wanderings; they've left Egypt behind, they come into the wilderness and Amalek is the first nation, in fact, of course, we read of Amalek back in Genesis 14 verse 7, but it was Moses who was writing that account, and Moses was writing it a long time after the events in the life of Abraham, so he uses the term 'the land of the Amalekites, back in Genesis 14. They didn't exist as a nation back then, Amalek was a grandson of Esau and didn't become a nation until much later.

The name actually occurs 7 times in this chapter. Seven we know is a covenant number, and this chapter is about God's covenant that He made in Genesis 3 verse 15, we're going to see that as we proceed. As I said, he's called Amalek as though one man, and represents one in a multitude; I believe there is no question that Amalek represents the serpent, all you need to do is cast your eye across to verse 16 and you'll see that that's the case. Where's this language drawn from in verse 16? 'for he said, because Yahweh hath sworn that Yahweh will have war with Amalek from generation to generation', so here's the last occurrence of the term 'Amalek' in the chapter of the 7, and he's quoting from the first covenant made in the bible, 'I will put enmity between the serpent and the woman'. That enmity, that hostility would go on until the serpent was utterly abolished, so the language of Genesis 3 verse 15 is picked up in verse 16 of this chapter and tells us quite plainly in the divine mind that Amalek represents the 'serpent power' or 'human self interest'.

So why did he turn up here in verse 8? Well, it's pretty logical, isn't it? the first 7 verses of this chapter talk about Moses striking the rock and water flowing out to sustain Israel, so he came for the water. What did that water represent? well, it represented life in Christ, the life of Christ, water flowing from Him to give life to us. So it represents life in Christ, and who turns up to take it away? who's going to get in the way of us getting into the kingdom? It's obvious, isn't it? Amalek turns up, human self interest; so when we come into the truth we drink deeply of the water of life that is given to us in Christ. If we don't get into the kingdom it's because our own self interest will get in the way; and my experience, and I've been in the truth for almost 40 years and my experience is exactly that! Every day I get up, my own self interest stands in the way of walking in the truth; you've got to fight against him every day. There's got to be a constant struggle, Yahweh will have war with Amalek from generation to generation in our life from day to day.

There's no escaping that fact! if you want to give the fight up, Amalek will have won, human self interest will have destroyed you!

Now how do we prove this? Well, there are various ways of proving it, here's just one! Amalek, the name '**Amalek**' (6002) occurs 24 times in the bible. An **Amalekite** or **Amalekites** (plural) occurs 27 times in the bible. That's 51 over all; the meaning of the name Amalek according to Young's concordance is '**warlike**'; according to the Hebrew-English Bible Student's concordance his name means '**a strangler of the people**'. Well, I don't mind either one of those, Amalek representing the serpent is 'warlike', he also is a strangler of the people (there are some snakes, not in Canada I don't think, but that's how they kill, they strangle). So here he is, the serpent power and he's arraigned against us, now where do we find him? Well, have a quick look at Galatians 5 and verses 19 to 21 where Paul says, 'The works of the flesh are manifest', then he goes on to list them, 'adultery etc.' you count them up and you'll find there are 17 works of the flesh. He talks about the works of the flesh, did you notice that? then he goes on to talk about the 'fruits of the Spirit'. So he has this idea of works and fruit in mind, contrasting them; so works are, you might say, fruit or manifestations. #3 is the number of fruit or result in the bible, #17 that's the number of things he cites here as coming from the flesh, the works or fruits of the flesh; 17 to the Hebrew was the number of 'absolute completion', it contains of course, 10 (the number of ordinal perfection + 7 completeness amongst other things) so when you talk about 17 to a Hebrew it's absolutely complete. Well, all of you know that if you multiply $3 \times 17 = 51$; I don't think that's an accident, the works of the flesh are the works of Amalek; and Amalek, Amalekite or Amalekites occurs a total of 51 times in the scripture; there's an accuracy and as I said, there are many different ways that you can prove this, and this is just one of them. It demonstrates that the Spirit is trying to tell us something, when we come and read Exodus 17 about Amalek, we are reading about **the serpent manifesting his works**, he wants to take away the sustaining Spirit water that Yahweh has given to us, that we might have salvation!

Now let's go back to the Old Testament, we won't go back to Exodus 17 just yet, we want to come back to Numbers 24, because in Numbers 24 verse 20 there's just one verse in the prophecies of Balaam which is highly significant in relation to Amalek. Numbers 24 verse 20, where it says in the 5th parable of Balaam and just this one verse, 'When he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever'. Now your margin if it's the same as mine for that phrase 'the first of the nations', it says, 'the first of the nations that warred against Israel'. Well, that's true, Amalek was the first of the nations that warred against Israel, but the text doesn't say that, the literal Hebrew text does not say that! This word that is used 'first' re'shiyth (7225), is similar or cognate with the word 'rosh', in fact, the root of this word is 'rosh', the head. So he's the head or the first of the nations. (full stop!) But he wasn't, everyone knows that Amalek wasn't the first nation among men; so what does this mean? Young's literal translates it 'the beginning of the 'Goyim' is Amalek'; Rotherham says, 'the beginning of nations'; the Jerusalem bible says, 'Amalek, first among the nations'; yes and no, Amalek was the first to fight

against Israel during their probation in the wilderness, but the Spirit is here emphasizing that Amalek, although not the first nation to exist, nevertheless, represents Yahweh's greatest enemy because His greatest enemy is **sin**, symbolized by the serpent of Genesis 3 verse 15. We know that from Exodus 17 verse 16, 'I will have war', this is God speaking, 'I will have war', and he'll never give up until this power is destroyed. So He describes it through Balaam as **the first of the nations**, because they are His principal enemy and He is determined to destroy them. So how does He destroy them, at least, how does He overwhelm them in the times of Moses and Joshua? Well we know that's the record that we have back in Exodus 17 to which we shall come in a moment.

Balaam says at the end of verse 20 here of Numbers 24, 'But his latter end shall be that he shall perish forever', that is, he would come to utter destruction. The word 'perish' (8) 'obed' means 'wretched or destruction' and there are only 2 occurrences of the word in the Old Testament, here and in verse 24. The root 'abad' means to 'wander away, to lose oneself, hence 'to disappear, to perish', that is the end that Yahweh has determined upon this power Amalek, and it will only come to pass, of course, at the end of the millennium when the drama of Genesis 3 verse 15 will have fully played itself out, and the serpent power, carnal flesh will be utterly removed from the earth. So that's enough about Amalek! Now we can go back and look at the other principal character in this record of Exodus 17.

We know whom Amalek represents, we know we're in the context of a covenant, we now have a battle on our hands, who is the principal antagonist to Amalek in this contest. Well, Yahweh, of course, but who is His representative to lead His people against Amalek? Exodus 17 verse 9 tells us who it is! 'And Moses said unto Joshua, choose us out men and go out and fight with Amalek'. Now let's pause for a second, that word 'men' there in verse 9, is the Hebrew word 'enosh' (582) which means 'weak, mortal men'. So Joshua is told to take a company of Israelites, weak, mortal men and to go and fight with Amalek. When Yahweh sent His answer to the problem of the serpent, which He had prefigured in Genesis 3 verse 15, He sent One who was raised up amongst weak, mortal men. His name was Jehoshua (3091), Yahweh's salvation, and Joshua appears for the first time, in the bible here in verse 9, he suddenly appears as Yahweh's salvation, the antagonist to Amalek. Isn't that amazing? well, it's not so amazing because we would expect it, wouldn't we? That's exactly what happens! The name occurs 4 times in the chapter, the #4 is the number among other things that means 'righteousness', so here's God's answer to the power of sin. A man who would come to represent His righteousness in that contest against sin.

Now Joshua in other places, for instance, in Numbers 11 verse 28 is called Joshua the son of Nun; and 'son' by the way is the word 'ben' and 'ben' means a 'family builder' (1121), so he's the family builder of perpetuity because that's what that word 'Nun' means, it comes from the root 'to resprout' (5125), something that comes out of the earth and resprouts; that is to propagate by shoots, figuratively to be perpetual because this cycle goes on. So here he is, the family builder of perpetuity, Yahweh's salvation who's going to bring eternal life for many others. His work is going to see a family built

up who will live forever into perpetuity! That's the message that Exodus 17 is bringing home to us.

So then, in verse 9 we read towards the end of the verse, 'Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand'. Now this rod of God we've already talked about in our previous session. Let's just review very quickly what we said: In Exodus 4, this rod, the serpent rod, became a serpent, it's related to the earth and to sin. It's called **the rod of God** here and elsewhere. It is used to smite the rock, and we saw it representing Christ's crucifixion, however, I want you to notice something. I want you to notice that he says in verse 9, 'I will go to the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand', but do you know what ends up happening? It ends up being in his **hands**, it starts off being in Moses' hand and ends up being in his hands. That is very, very significant and we'll come to that shortly. So this rod of God which represents the crucifixion of Christ and specifically the cross or tree itself, is going to play a very important part in what now follows.

So let's read down from verse 10, this is what unfolds when Joshua gathers his group of weak, mortal men and goes out to fight against Amalek, the power of the serpent, who wants to take away **the living water of life**. It says in verse 10, 'So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and he fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill'. Now they play a very important part shortly, because Moses takes these two men with him to the top of the hill, and they have to support him in a moment. It says in verse 11, 'And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand' (notice this) he's got a rod, the serpent rod in his hand, just like he had it over the land of Egypt, and 5 plagues unfolded. So he's holding up the rod of God in his hand, but it doesn't stay there. We don't know how long this battle went on, but we do know this, at the end of verse 12, 'his **hands** were steady until the going down of the sun', so if we assume that this battle began by at least midday, it probably went on (could I suggest) for 6 hours, they pinned Christ to the cross at 9 am. and He died at 3pm; 6 hours! It would be very fitting, wouldn't it? if it turned out to be that length of time, because what happens here, was a representation of the crucifixion of Christ. The struggle of Joshua with the serpent power on the plain, and it depicts what our Lord Jesus Christ did in the nature of weak, mortal men.

So we read down! Verse 11, 'And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand', and that word 'let down' (5117) is the word 'nuwach' and it means 'to rest'; now if I was to ask you to hold something up that's reasonably heavy, I wonder how long you'd be able to hold it up? You try it one day, get a hold of someone's walking stick and hold it up in the air, and see how long you can hold it up! after a while you've got to rest. Maybe you can put it in the other hand, but even that one, you've got to rest it! you might even put up two hands, you'll find even after a while that's too much, you've got to rest it. So when Moses had his hand raised Joshua prevailed, when his hand was rested, Amalek prevailed. Now I want to digest for just a couple of seconds, when we live our lives, taking up our cross daily, Yahweh prevails; when we forget that we were baptized into the death of Christ and we live for

ourselves, Amalek prevails. That's what happens in our life! so there's the little simple lesson that comes out of our life, but let's take this to the higher level.

Verse 12, 'But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone (that word 'stone' is 'eben' (68) it means 'a building stone', it's a base, it's the word used of the work of Christ, who was the chief corner stone, the building stone). So they took a stone 'eben' to build the family and they set him on it; 'and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun' (read, until death, that's the language of Luke 23 verse 46, Christ died in darkness), so they held his hands steady until the sun went down. This is depicting the crucifixion of Christ, so who do these 3 represent? We've got **Moses, Aaron and Hur**, lets' have a look at it.

Well, **Aaron** of course, was not yet the high priest, that appointment was to come later, in Exodus 28 verse 1, so at this stage he is the high priest elect, he is therefore, a type of Christ here in preparation.

Moses, Moses the man of God was Israel's lawgiver and we are told that Christ was to be a prophet like unto Moses, in Deuteronomy 18 verse 18; so we've got the high priest elect and we've got a prophet unto whom Christ was to be like.

We've got **Hur**, Hur (2354) means 'white linen' and in Revelation 19 verse 8, white linen is, of course, said to be a symbol of the righteousnesses of the saints. So here is a man who represents righteousness and we're told in Exodus 31 verse 2 that he's from the tribe of Judah, the royal tribe. So he represents the other aspect to priesthood, he represents royalty, Christ as son of David and King elect.

So these 3 men together, locked together on the top of the hill (that's significant, isn't it?) the top of the hill, these 3 men represent Christ during His ministry. He was not yet high priest but He would be after resurrection, He was not yet king, but He would be in due time, but He was the prophet! and it was the prophet like unto Moses that would have his hands pinned to a tree in order that He might become high priest and king. So you see, that's why I've quoted at the top of that slide (#14) the words of Hebrews 12, '**for the joy that was set before Him**, He endured the cross and despised the shame; the joy that was set before Him was that He would become high priest and He would become king.

So get the scene in your mind! Try and create this picture! You've got a plain, on that plain there is water flowing through it; the Amalekites have come to take it. Moses sends Joshua with a band of Israelites, weak, mortal men; they're fighting and their fighting goes on for hours. When Moses' hands are raised, Joshua and the men of Israel prevailed; when he tires and his hands fell down, Amalek prevails. It goes backwards and forwards, **but** the victory is won that day when Aaron on one side and Hur on the other, hold up his hands, and Moses' hands, it says in verse 12, were steady until the going down of the sun. There as Joshua is fighting on the plain (Joshua

representing Jesus) he looks up and what does he see? he sees Moses sitting on the building stone of God's house with the high priest elect and the king in prospect of the tribe of Judah, propping up his hands, holding on to the symbol of the cross of Christ. That's the imagery we have here in this chapter 17 of Exodus.

It's the imagery of a man being crucified, His hands are steady until the going down of the sun and his head as it were, would drop, 'It is finished, the work is done; the victory over Amalek, at least as far as He is concerned is complete; and with his resurrection from the dead, He leaves behind forever the serpent to which He has been related by nature.

That's the imagery! Look at verse 13, 'Joshua discomfited Amalek', the word 'discomfited' means 'to prostrate' by implication therefore, 'to overthrow' (2522), he prostrated Amalek, 'and his people with the edge of the sword'. Paul tells us in Hebrews 4 verse 12, 'that the Word of God is quick (alive) and sharper than any two-edged sword', in other words, it's the Spirit that won this battle. Then something very curious happened, extremely curious, (your screen) look at it, verse 14; and verse 14 says (and I've got Young's Literal translation on the screen) it says, 'Write this for a memorial in a book and set it in the ears of Joshua' (slide #15), and it says in the AV, 'rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; that I do utterly wipe away the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens'. Now I want to ask you a couple of questions! If you were Joshua at the end of that battle, exhausted, and Moses said to you, 'here, sit down there, I'm going to read you a book', who me? I've just lead Israel to victory. **Sit down, I'm going to read it in your ears**'. He isn't going to read it to Israel, they might have heard about it in due time, he's rehearsing it in the ears of Joshua! why? why would God do that? because the Father saw in another 2,000 years or so, there would be a young boy who would come to the synagogue in Nazareth one day, and He would open the scroll and in that day, the record would be what we call Exodus 17, and He'd begin to read this record and as He read down through it, His comprehension which is far in advance of what we'd ever be even then; His comprehension would be, 'this is about Me, this is about My work!' and when He came to verse 14, He would read this, 'and Yahweh said to Moses, write this for a memorial in a book (He' reading a book) and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, because this is His work. I will utterly wipe out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven, and He will begin that work.' Can you imagine, b&s, the effect of that upon the young Jesus? Can you imagine the profound influence this context would have on Him? Make no mistake about it, He would know exactly what this was about - if we can understand it, He would know a lot more even as a young boy than what we'll ever know about it. He would see in this the work Yahweh had set down for Him to do, **set it in the ears of Joshua (Jesus)**.

So what did Moses do then when this 'is set in the ears of Joshua'? Well, what he does in the record of Exodus 17 verse 15, he builds an altar. It says, 'Moses built an altar and called the name of it **Yahweh Nissi**'; now this word 'nissi' (5251) is actually the Hebrew word 'nec' signifying a flag or a pole or a sail, something that you put up in the air. Strong's says 'a flagstaff'; it's previous use in the Old Testament, well, it's next use in

the Old Testament is Numbers 21 and verses 8 and 9 where it is used of the pole that Moses lifts up; so here is a word that has to do with lifting something up in the air as Gesenius says, something that can be seen afar off. It's used of a banner raised in war to gather the people to a place of assembly, a column or a lofty pole, a sign by which anyone is warned. First occurrence is here, it's next occurrence is Numbers 21 verses 8 and 9 and there are only 21 occurrences in the whole of the Old Testament of this word; and there's no doubt, as we'll see tomorrow morning, God willing, what Numbers 21 is about, because we're told in chapter 3 verse 14, 'that even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so the Son of man must be lifted up'. So there's no question at all that this 'nec' represents the cross of Christ. So Moses builds an altar, he's going to memorialize these events and he calls it 'Yahweh Nissi' for that very reason. Now people have struggled and struggled with this, but there's no need to struggle, because you can paraphrase what this verse is saying: it says in verse 16, 'Because Yahweh hath sworn that He will have war', so this 'nissi or nec' represents **Yahweh being manifested by sacrifice on a pole in order to assemble His people for warfare**. That's how you could paraphrase what Moses does here in verses 15 and 16, it's about gathering people to take up their cross and to follow the example of Joshua, who has destroyed in himself the power of Amalek.

Now the Companion bible has its say on this, it says, 'the margins of the AV and RV show the perplexity caused by the ellipsis of the verb. Surely the hand (lifted up) upon the banner of Yah (is to swear): for the war of Yahweh against Amalek is to be from generation to generation'. If you have a look at verse 16, when Moses builds this altar he says these words, and if you have a look at the margin at a #4 it says, 'a hand is upon the throne of Yahweh'. Now if you look up the translation as we shall do in a moment, you will see there is a large variety of interpretation of what the Hebrew means here; so there's a lot of confusion amongst commentators as to what this means, but there's no doubt really about what this is saying. So the Companion bible goes on to say, 'So it was, it was carried by Ehud, by Barak, by Gideon, by Saul, by Samuel, by David, the Simeonites and by Mordecai, and it quotes all these passages where those faithful men and women set out to fight this battle on Yahweh's behalf. So at least in that much, they've got that right! but they haven't nailed it down.

Here are the translations, (Slide 18):

Rotherham - 'because of a hand against the throne of Yah, Yah hath war with Amalek from generation to generation'.

Young's Literal - 'because a hand is on the throne of Yah, war is to Yahweh with Amalek from generation to generation'. This is the one I prefer,

Jerusalem bible - 'Lay hold of the banner, (the 'nec' which represents the cross) of Yahweh, for Yahweh is at war etc.....

Moffat - 'we pledge loyalty to the Eternal's banner in His feud against Amalek from age to age'.

So there are the translations, what does that mean to you and me? Well, we've seen

what Exodus 17 is about; we've seen this picture of Joshua on the plain, looking up to that hilltop and seeing Moses and Aaron and Hur beside him, with his arms fixed, holding on to what represents the cross of Christ; and the call goes out for you and me, b&s and young people, to follow that example. To take up our cross daily and follow our Master, to lay hold to the banner of Yahweh, and it's going to be an act of sacrifice, because the altar in verse 15 is made but we don't read of any offerings being made on this altar. The one great offering has been made, but Moses builds an altar as a memorial! he wants people to lay hold on the principle of sacrifice and to take up this battle from day to day, from generation to generation, because it is Yahweh's battle.

Now you can't get a simpler lesson than that, can you? It is just so simple to understand, but you and I know, it is not quite so simple to put into practice. Only those that understand what God is trying to do in their lives will have the incentive to take up their cross daily and to follow in the steps of Jehoshua! You have to have faith, that's what the early part of this chapter was about, you have to be able to see the Invisible.

So brethren and sisters and young people, let us take up the cross, let us follow in the way, because this is where it's going to lead; it will lead to the end of the process, when the serpent power will be finally destroyed from the earth. There are 3 stages to this:

1. There was Christ who destroyed the serpent in Himself;
2. At His return He will change our nature and the serpent will be destroyed in us;
3. And a 1,000 years later, He will utterly abolish the serpent from the earth.

But it won't be without pain, every generation that goes through this process has to go through pain and testing. People have to make choices, Jehoshua made his choice, we have to make choices; we're not going to be rid of the serpent without choosing to take up the cross. So it will be in the millennium, come to Revelation 20, here it tells us of the end of this process; we know the story very well. We've got a reference to the mighty angel of verse 1 coming down from heaven, with the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. This is a reference to Christ and the saints and their work of subduing the nations, and it's not far away. It says in verse 2, 'He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and Satan and bound him a thousand years'. So now we're in stage 3, the saints have been immortalized, the thousand years of probation is given to the nations. The old serpent is bound but he's released; we know, when it says in verse 7, 'when the 1,000 years are expired Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and the old serpent is given opportunity and guess what he will do! After a 1,000 years of the rule of Christ and the saints, the old serpent will go back to human self interest. They will try and throw off the yoke, they live in a virtually perfect environment and they will try and throw it off, because they want to do their own thing!

We read of that in verse 8, (slide #19) the final destruction of the serpent, for Amalek. That's why these terms are used in verse 8, 'He shall go out to deceive the nations

which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea'. So the adversary which is released at the end of the millennium and deceives or misleads the nations as it says, is called Gog and Magog. It's a reference to the serpent in political manifestation; it's not the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel 38 and 39. The reason for the use of Gog and Magog here is because of their connections with Amalek. If you go back to the record of Numbers 24, you will find that **Gog** or **Agag** (same thing essentially) Gog or Agag is identified with Amalek, so that's why Gog and Magog are here, it's the Amalekite principle that God is talking about; it's the principle of human self interest that will get in the way of multitudes of people, whose number is as the sand of the seashore. What will stand between them and eternal life even after a thousand years of Christ, **is human self interest**, the serpent power?

But there's something interesting here, it says in verse 8, 'to gather them together to battle'. Battle, the word in the Greek is 'polemos' and it means 'warfare' (4171), it is the word used by the Septuagint (that's the Greek version of the Old Testament) for Exodus 17 verse 16, 'Yahweh will have war'. When the Septuagint translators chose a Greek word for the Hebrew word 'war', they chose this word 'polemos', because you see, it's a reference to the same battle. What we have here in Revelation 20, is the end of that battle, when Amalek is utterly and finally abolished, when the work of Christ is complete and the serpent power is totally destroyed, then the earth can have rest. That's the story of Exodus 17, you and I, b&s, are somewhere on that path, we are in the way. Amalek is still at work! he has been defeated in one man, Yahweh is endeavouring to defeat him in many men and women. Whether or not we will be there, to destroy him at the end of the millennium, and utterly abolish him from the earth, will depend upon what we do between now and the reappearance of Jehoshua, Yahweh's salvation. Do you know what you've got to do, it's pretty simple, isn't it? it's pretty simple, **'lay hold on the 'nec', take up your cross daily and follow Him.**