

A Bible Adventure

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Winning a Battle with Lifted Hands

A retelling of Exodus 17

At one time when the Amalekites—a fierce nomadic people who lived in the Sinai Desert—swooped down to make war with the wandering tribes of Israel, Moses summoned Joshua to his side.

“Choose some men and go out and fight the Amalekites,” said Moses. “Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.”

Joshua did as Moses commanded, and while the

battle raged below, Moses, Aaron, and Hur stood on the brow of the hill, which overlooked the battlefield.

As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites began to win.

The battle raged on, and after some time Moses’ arms grew tired. As Moses’ hands drooped, Aaron and Hur saw the tide of the battle turn

against the Israelites, and so they found a large stone for Moses to sit on. Then, Aaron on one side of Moses and Hur on the other held Moses’ hands up so that his hands remained steady until sunset. Consequently, the victory was assured.

In this way, Joshua overcame the Amalekites with the sword. But God, through His servant Moses, demonstrated that it was not just the sword that had won the battle, for Joshua

had only been able to prevail while Moses’ hands were lifted, which gave all the glory to God.

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write this story on a scroll for a remembrance and make sure Joshua hears it.”

After having won a great victory over his aggressors, Moses built an altar near the scene of this battle, and he called it “the Lord is my banner.”

See “The Plagues of Egypt” and “Walking Through the Sea” for earlier parts of the story of Moses and the children of Israel.