

Lessons from Aaron and Hur

This morning I would like to talk to you about the biblical example of Aaron and Hur. As we join the battle we see Israel was fighting the forces of Amalek In Rephidim.

Now Moses was up on top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand. When he held the staff up Israel prevailed, when his hand got heavy and he let the staff down, the tide of the battle turned against them.

Now there were a couple of people with Moses looking down on the battle. Their names were Aaron and Hur.

Being helpful guys, they got a rock for Moses to sit on and they took up positions on either side of Moses and held up his hands. Let's dig a bit deeper into why...

The Narrative

Let's read the account in the scripture. Turn with me to Exodus 17:8-20 NASB

Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

How many people know that Israel was God's chosen people? How many people know that we are the new Israel? There is still the nation of Israel but there is also the spiritual Israel in which we all become God's chosen people.

In the Old Testament Israel is called the wife of Jehovah, and in the New Testament the Church is referred to as the bride of Christ. Israel is a type-ology of the Church

1 Peter 2:9-10 (NASB)

But you are A chosen race, A royal priesthood, A holy nation, A people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not A people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy

We are all members of a royal priesthood.

Exodus 19:5-5 (NASB)

Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. ' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel

The Battle

Do you believe this morning that there is an actual spiritual battle going on around you; that cannot be seen by the naked eye? Well there is, it is a battle between the forces of light and darkness. While you may not see the swords and shields often times we see the effects of the battle.

Today our church is in a battle with the enemy for possession of the village of Salmo.

Your Job

So what can we learn from this example and the principles shown within it?

First as a congregation it is your responsibility (notice I didn't say task) to hold up the leadership in your church, to hold up their hands in the battle as it were.

Here are some simple ways you can do this:

- Attend Church Regularly - make it a valued priority in your life
- Be Attentive in Church – Keep focus on worship and what the Lord is saying
- Look for opportunities to chime in with an Amen or a Hallelujah!
- When we worship, raise your voice to God and actually worship, sing praise, glorify God.
- Use words of encouragement with each other – build a culture of honor
- Give of your time and your resources
- Respect your leadership – Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

Note:

- Many pastors and church leaders have given up because of the adversity they face not just from the world - but also from those who would undermine God's message from the pulpit.
- I know that some of what I say today may not appeal to some of you and I am okay with that. I wish it were not so, but blessed be the name of the Lord.

- The enemy uses our reluctance or reticence and pride to prevent us from hearing the words we don't want to hear.

I will not compromise the message of the scriptures to tickle ears or to fill seats...

- Jesus has said in John 16:33: *"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world"*

We are told as leadership and congregation to hold fast and endure...

- *In 2 Timothy 4:3-5 (NASB) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry*

Remember Aaron and Hur?

Just like when Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands as he held the rod of God, and Israel prevailed so to when we hold up the hands of each other in the body and most especially our church leadership, the church will prevail over the efforts of Satan. He will lose the battle and will be unable to hinder the services or the move of God in our Church.

On a personal note: I covet your prayers, I feel it when you are praying and hedging me up. This is extremely valuable to me, because I like so many others here, strap on the armor of God and go into battle on a daily basis. I am not ashamed to say that I need Aarons and Hurs to hold me up in prayer as we go into battle. God is my strength. But the bible tells us

Joshua 23:10

One of your men puts to flight a thousand, for the Lord your God is He who fights for you, just as He promised you. So take diligent heed to yourselves to love the Lord your God

Deuteronomy 32:30

How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the Lord had given them up? "Indeed their rock is not like our Rock"

God keeps his Word.

Romans 4:20-21

...yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform

Grieving the Holy Spirit

Many times our natural reaction is to resist the Spirit. Often his will is contrary to our own nature. Remember we are all still on that journey of sanctification. When we resist the Spirit we grieve him. When we say “No” to the Spirit of God we grieve him. Pushing away ignoring or rejecting what the Spirit is saying to us causes us harm.

When I preach it is not from my ideas, concepts or thoughts. That is why everything I preach must be substantiated in scripture. It is not about doing the will of the Pastor, but about hearing, and applying the Word of God that is preached in our lives

My point is do not quench the Spirit of God.

1 Thessalonians 5:19

Do not quench the Spirit

Ephesians 4:30-31

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

We must be ever vigilant to not reject the influence of the Holy Spirit on our services... Let's expand that passage. Ephesians 4:17-32

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. BE angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Paul is warning us that we can push away and grieve the Holy Spirit. We are admonished to yield to the Spirit. Paul acknowledges that even to those who are sealed with the Holy Spirit that evil thoughts and actions are still a temptation.

We need to take this seriously. When we feel the leading of the Holy Spirit, let us not push it away. Let us listen and act in obedience to the Word of the Lord.

A Culture of Honor

Lift up the hands of all of those in the body who are doing the work of the Lord. Like Aaron and Hur, lend your strength to the battle. God didn't need the staff to be held up he could deliver the victory without it, but he was looking for those who would endure and obey.

This is not a popular point but Leaders are Leaders to Lead...

In Hebrews 13:17-18 we are told:

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.

Check this out... being a church leader has a job description in 1 Timothy 3 1-12

It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and

fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus

Leaders are Accountable

Here is the bottom line. I have to obey God or he will chastise me. I cannot compromise what I am saying, because I actually revere God and I believe that I will have to answer to him for every word. As uncomfortable as it is for a peacemaker, exhorter, restorer to do, the Word of God is clear in its direction to Pastors. In 2

Timothy 4:2 it says:

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

Many did not like what Jesus said... Paul attested to this in

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God

The Battle is Spiritual

Ephesians 6:12-13

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Sound like an impossible task. If you take one thing away this morning listen to this next point...

God is our Strength – The Battle is the Lords

Throughout scripture God constantly sought to impress upon his people that they were not supposed to rely on their own strength, wisdom, knowledge and understanding but that they lean on him. He told them that he was to be their strength. You see the victory of the battle was not really in Moses' hands. It wasn't in the rod of God it wasn't in their fierce determination, or by their power. It was in the principle of lifting up and supporting what God had put into place. We are to rely on our almighty God. God honored the culture of honor that was established at the battle with Amalek.

Remember the account of Gideon in the bible. Current academic estimates place the number of Amalek's men at about 135,000

Gideon wanted to win the battle so he called forth thirty two thousand men. The Midianites he was facing had about one - two hundred thousand men. Gideon would have been thinking: "Only 32,000 against 135,000" that's at least 4:1 against us...

God said: "It's too many." "...My own hand hath gotten this victory"
Gideon sent back those who were afraid to go to battle. Twenty two thousand went back... Leaving Gideon with 10,000 men for battle against 135,000. 14:1 against.

God said to Gideon. "It's too many"

How many of us would be thinking about this time... Uh God have I offended you or?

After all is said and done, God leaves Gideon with 300 men to face 135,000 which is 450:1

Gideon's force was now just under 1% of what he started with...

God wanted to impress upon Gideon that victory pertains to heaven and not to the strength or ingenuity of men. We are to lean upon him, his Word, his understanding. In all our ways we are to acknowledge him.

The Purpose of the Bible

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

It is for these purposes that we study the bible and work to apply it into our lives. In a culture of honor we hold each other up in our battles with the enemy and we hold our leadership up as they guide us forward to do the will of the Lord. The end goal is that you are equipped for every good work.

Going Deeper

Did you know that in scripture the rod speaks of discipline? Did you notice that Moses held up the Rod of God?

Proverbs 29:15

The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

Did you notice that both Aaron and Hur held up their leaders arm in the battle? As he held up the rod of God, they helped him do it.

Did you notice that Aaron and Hur and Moses were all under the rod of God and when under the Rod of God the battle went for them and when they were above the rod, the battle went against them?

Do you know that Jesus is referred to as the Rock in scripture? I find it interesting that Moses was seated firmly upon the Rock under the discipline of the rod of God. Supported in battle by those obedient to the Spirit of God.

The bible tells us that the office of a pastor should not be given to a novice so that they don't become puffed up. It is so easy for some to confuse Godly respect for leadership, with some kind of admiration of themselves personally. Our world tears people down and makes them susceptible to this tactic.

You can love and respect your leaders and the scripture is clear in your responsibility in this matter, but every leader needs to humble themselves before God. Every leader should understand the message in the narrative of Aaron and Hur. They were servants to Moses for the good of their people under God.

Back to Accountability

Today so many pastors, especially in the media, are making critical errors in placing themselves as equal with God instead of his servants. Remember that even Moses was forbidden to enter the promise land and because he struck the rock twice with

the rod of God instead of once as instructed and said: "shall we" as if he and God were bringing forth the miracle.

I am here to say that there is a remnant of ministers of the Gospel that revere God and are not out to self-glorify. Not every pastor or evangelist has his eye on your wallet. Some really care in a Godly fashion. Don't let the enemy cause you to grieve the Holy Spirit by falling prey to their failings. Leaders fall when they rely on their own strength instead of Gods.

Numbers 20:9-12

So Moses took the rod from before the Lord, just as He had commanded him; and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them

I believe that in any spiritual battles we face, this is the formula for victory over the onslaughts of the enemy. When we as a church embrace God and his principles, when we listen and obey the voice of God, when we subject ourselves to the authority of his Word, the battle is won.

Every person here that believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is a member of the royal priesthood of God and as such is worthy of respect. Every person here this morning has a responsibility to hold each other up but also every person here today has a responsibility to hold up the leadership and the pastor of the church and to obey the direction of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Prayer