

Message Notes

The Battle Belongs to the Lord

Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

Introduction – Summer...

Today's Message:
The Battle belongs to the Lord
Exodus 17:8-16

Who are the Amalekites?

Exodus 17:8
Genesis 36:12

One day to get an army together?

Exodus 17:9a

"Here's what I am going to do"

Exodus 17:9b

The Battle belongs to the Lord

Exodus 17:10-13

It is NOT the strength of the army that wins the war.

It is NOT even the strength of the leader (Moses) and his reliance on God that wins the war.

It is God alone, even though we cooperate with him, that wins the war.

Never Forget

Exodus 17:14-18

Summary of this passage

(principles they would have picked up):

1. The Battle belonged to the Lord
2. There is Holy War
3. They were to worship and Never Forget

Summary of the passage for us

(Gospel Implications for us):

1. The Battle belonged to the Lord
Colossians 3:13-16
2. There is Holy War
BUT – it is not a physical war (nations),
but rather a spiritual war!

Ephesians 6:12-13a

Matthew 5:43-45

Micah 6:8

3. We are to worship and Never Forget

Gospel Applications:

Is the Battle the Lord's for you?

Are you waging spiritual war with the Lord's power?

Are you worshipping and raising your Ebenezer?

Exodus 17:8-16

⁸The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. ⁹Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites.

Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands."

¹⁰So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. ¹¹As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. ¹²When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. ¹³So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.

¹⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven."

¹⁵Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner. ¹⁶He said, "Because hands were lifted up against the throne of the LORD, the LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation."

Colossians 3:13-15

¹³When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Ephesians 6:12-13a

¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³Therefore put on the full armor of God...

Matthew 5:43-45

⁴³"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Micah 6:8

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

The page is framed by a wide, intricate border of floral and foliate motifs. The design features scrolling vines in shades of blue, orange, and green, interspersed with small, stylized flowers and leaves. The background of the border is a light, textured gold or cream color. The central text is set within a rectangular frame defined by a thin gold line.

The Gospel
According to
MOSES
a study of exodus

Exodus 17:8-16

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Exodus 17:8

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Who are the Amalekites?

Genesis 36:12

Esau's son Eliphaz also had a concubine named Timna, who bore him Amalek. These were grandsons of Esau's wife Adah.

Moses did not mention the reason for the Amalekites' attack on Israel, but even his very first readers would have known something of the history of enmity against Israel that carried on from the Esau-Jacob rivalry described in Genesis and something of the Amalekite modus operandi. Amalek was a grandson of Esau (Gen 36:12), and his descendants organized themselves into a very early national nomadic ...that lived partly by attacking other population groups and plundering their wealth (cf. Judg 3:13). The Amalekites had domesticated the camel and used its swiftness effectively in surprise attacks. Not only did the Amalekites attack Israel at Rephidim, but a year later they attacked them again at Hormah, when the Israelites had been driven out of southern Canaan



and were on the run after their foolish attempt to enter the promised land in spite of God's command through Moses that they could not (Num 14:43-45). The Amalekites may have traveled farther south on this occasion than was their usual habit in order to attack the Israelites perhaps because they had heard that Israel was far from any population center and relatively defenseless. The fact that in the ensuing encounter the Israelites lost to the Amalekites except when Moses kept the staff of God elevated indicates the basic military superiority of the Amalekites to the Israelites, something they presumably were counting on in launching this raid in the first place.



~ Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 393-394.

One day to prepare for war?

Exodus 17:9a

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“Here’s what I am going to do”

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1. The Battle belonged to the Lord

“As the Fang of Gabon say, ‘The chimpanzee fights because he counts on the help of the gorilla’ [meaning that those who are insignificant in themselves can accomplish much when a greater power is on their side].



~ Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary* (Nairobi, Kenya; Grand Rapids, MI: WordAlive Publishers; Zondervan, 2006), 107.

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Summary of this passage
(Gospel Implications for us)

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1. The Battle belongs to the Lord

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Colossians 3:13-15

¹³When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

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Summary of this passage
(Gospel Implications for us)

- 1. The Battle belongs to the Lord**
- 2. There is Holy War**

Holy War Principles

~ Adapted from Douglas Stuart

1. No standing army was allowed.
2. No pay for soldiers was permitted.
3. No personal spoil/plunder could be taken.
4. Holy war could be fought only for the conquest or defense of the promised land.
Israel had no right to any other land or to warfare for any other purpose.
5. Only at Yahweh's call could holy war be launched.
6. Solely through a prophet could that divine call come.
7. Yahweh did the real fighting in holy war because the war was always his.
8. Holy war was a religious undertaking, involving forms of self denial.
9. A goal of holy war was the total victory and obliteration of an evil culture.
10. The violator of the rules of holy war became an enemy.
11. Exceptions and mutations were possible, especially in the case of combat with those who were not original inhabitants of the promised land.
12. Decisive, rapid victory characterized faithful holy war

It is certainly true that God in the Old Testament exhibits wrath. But we must keep two things in mind. (1) God shows his wrath against the nations because they are attempting to get in the way of his redemptive plan. Israel is not just another nation. This tiny people is the vehicle God has chosen through which he will redeem humanity and all of creation. Israel's redemption is Phase One of that redemptive plan, and thus he guards that plan with jealousy. I admit that this does not solve the problem entirely. For example, why could God not simply bring these other nations along to an increased understanding of himself rather than destroy them? Or why could he not have made the Amalekites favorably disposed toward the Israelites and avoid the conflicts altogether? I do not know. But at the very least we should try to understand God's "extreme" behavior in the context of redemption as a whole. Sometimes the only way we can accept reasons for why God acts as he does is by faith.

(2) It is false to think of the “God of the Old Testament” (even the term should be repulsive to Christians) as a God of wrath, whereas the God of the New Testament is one of grace and patience. Even a surface reading of the Bible puts such a notion to rest. The Old Testament is replete with evidence of God’s patience and grace with the nations. Moreover, the New Testament is hardly devoid of God’s wrath. His plan to destroy the enemies of his people is no less apparent there. In fact, from a certain perspective the intensity increases. We don’t see the walls of Jericho toppling or godless people dropping like flies. But we do see the power of Satan, the true enemy of God and his people, crumbling daily. God’s warring activity is now directed at him, full blast! The victory has been secured at the resurrection of Christ and will be completed at his second coming.





There is Holy War – BUT it is not a physical war anymore. It is a spiritual war.

Ephesians 6:12-13a

¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God...

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Matthew 5:43-45

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

BEARING THE CROSS

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., AND THE
SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

DAVID J. GARROW

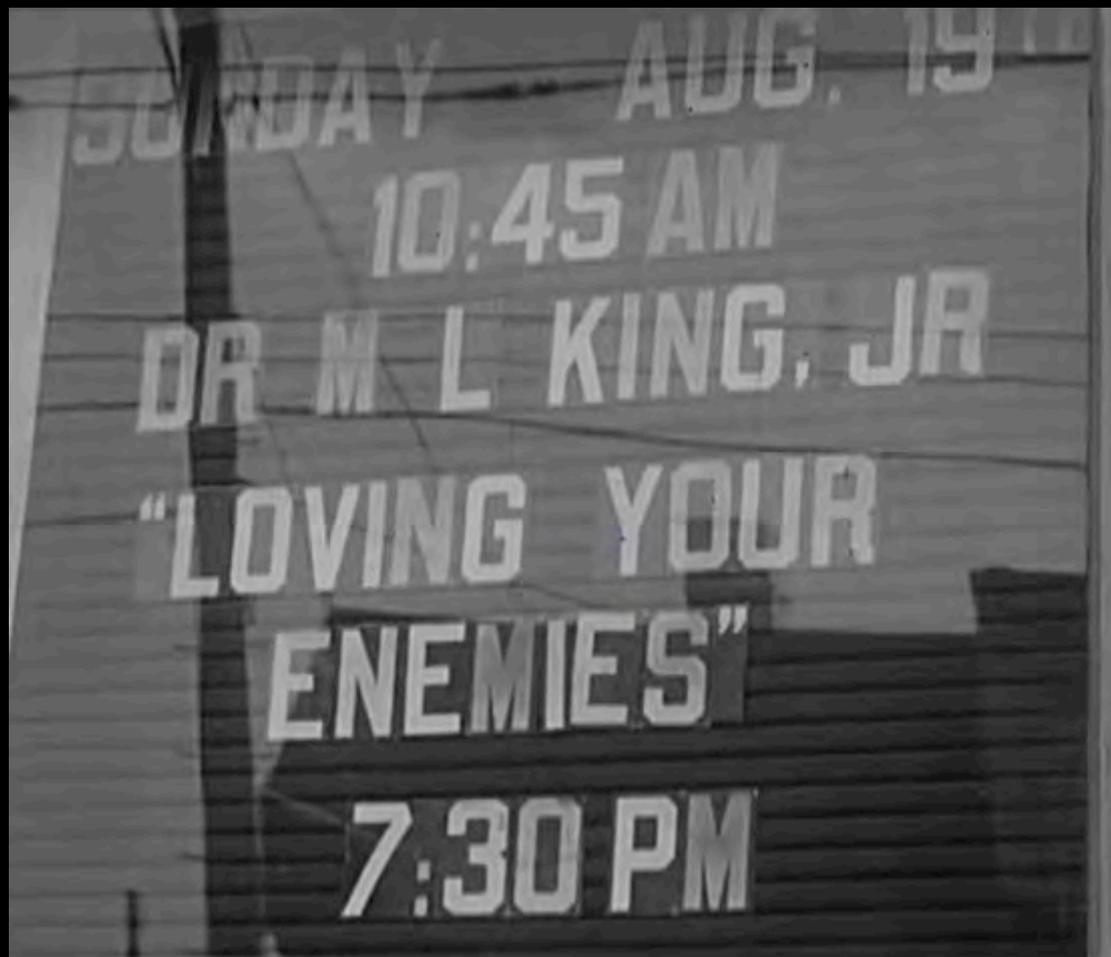


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“the Negro must come to the point of refusing to cooperate with evil,” but without ever hating the evildoers. “I have no malice toward anyone, not even the white policeman who almost broke my arm, who choked and kicked me. Let there be no malice among you.”

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“The real goal, however, was not to defeat the white man, but “to awaken a sense of shame within the oppressor and challenge his false sense of superiority....

The end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community” where all men would treat each other as brothers and equals. “There are great resources of goodwill in the southern white man that we must somehow tap,”

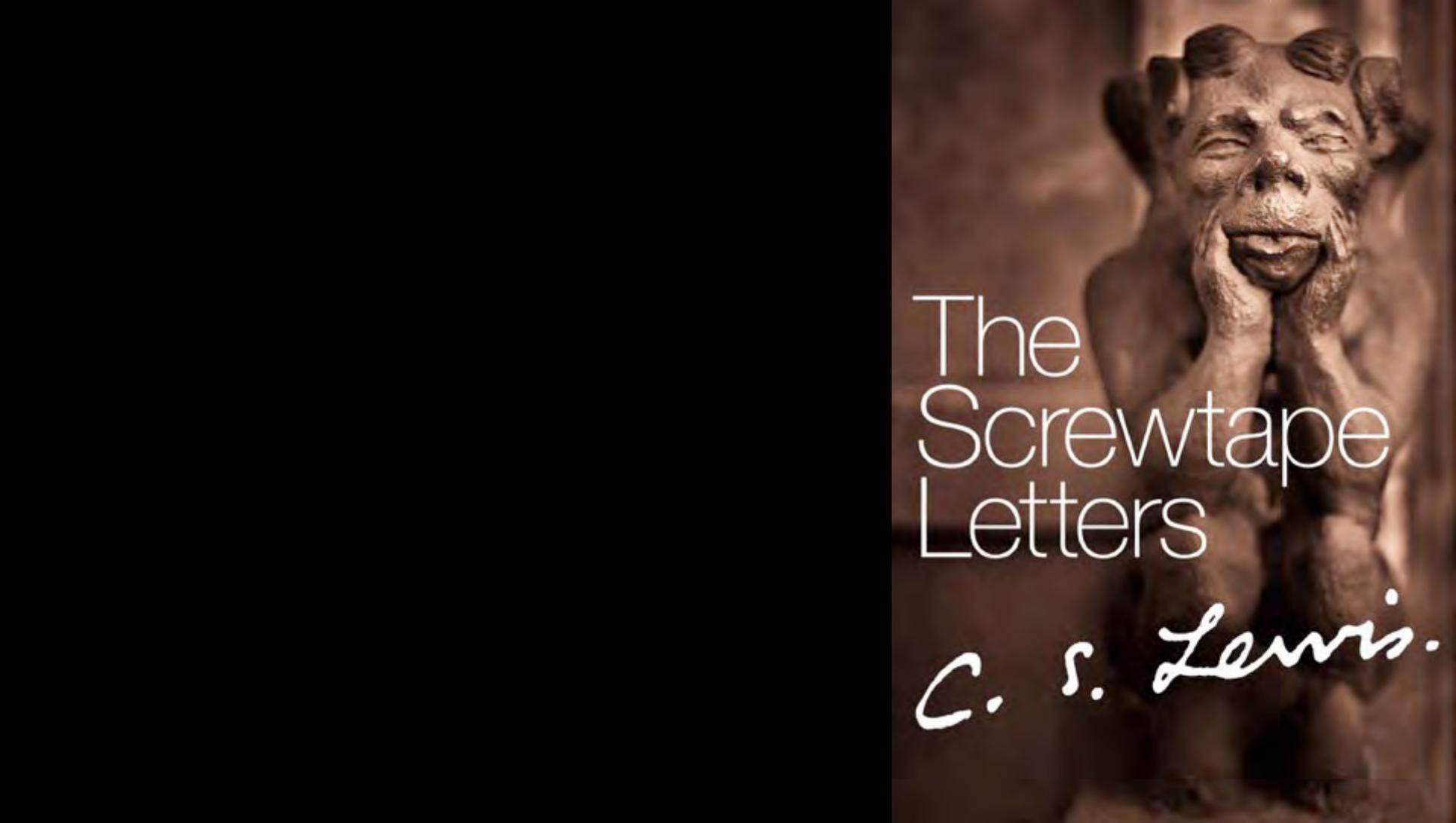
~ Martin Luther King, Jr. as quoted in David J. Garrow’s, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Leadership Christian Conference* (New York: 1999) Quill Publishing

**There is Holy War – BUT it is not a physical war
anymore. It is a spiritual war.**

Micah 6:8

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
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To act justly and
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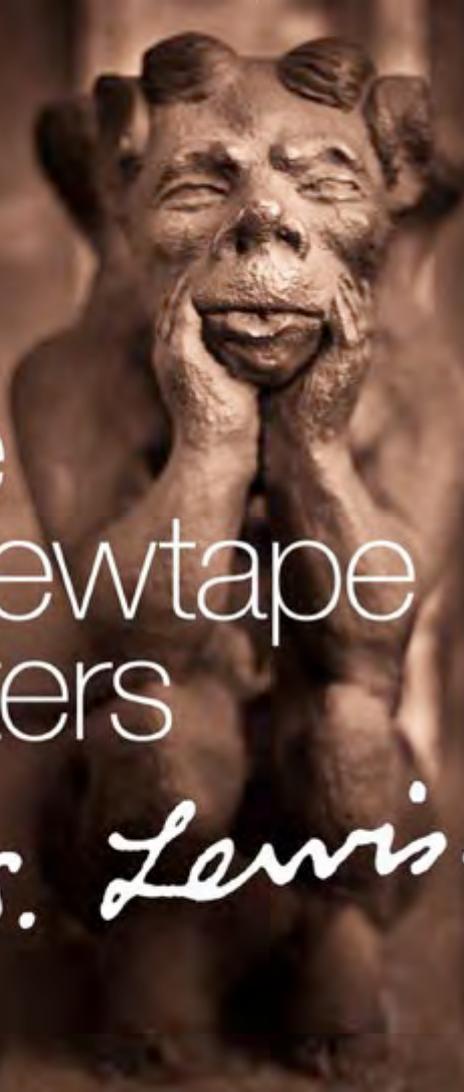
The background of the image is a sepia-toned photograph of a bronze sculpture. The sculpture depicts a young boy with a thoughtful expression, his hands clasped under his chin. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of his face and hands. The overall mood is contemplative and artistic.

The
Screwtape
Letters

C. S. Lewis.

“Let him say that he feels hatred not on his own behalf but on that of the women and children and that a Christian is told to forgive his own, not other people's enemies. In other words let him consider himself sufficiently identified with the women and children to feel hatred on their behalf, but not sufficiently identified to regard their enemies as his own and therefore proper objects of forgiveness...”

~ C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*, p 136.



The
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Summary of this passage
(Gospel Implications for us)

- 1. The Battle belongs to the Lord**
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Never Forget**

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Robert Robinson (lyrics) 1757; John Wyeth (original Melody)

CCLI #1181771

Come, thou fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.

Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise his name - I'm fixed upon it -
name of God's redeeming love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer,
hither by thy help I've come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure
safely to arrive at home.

Gospel Application:

Gospel Application:

Is the Battle the Lord's for you?

Are you waging spiritual war with the Lord's power?

Are you worshipping and raising your Ebenezer?