

It's Time To Take The Hill
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“Who will ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place?”

The Hill of The Lord

This Veterans day I received a vision of a person, most likely a soldier, climbing a hill. As I sought the Lord about what it meant, He reminded me of a vision I received from Him about a year after we ceased doing 24/7 at the Salem House of Prayer. In the vision I saw a clip from a movie I had watched called “Gettysburg.” At one point in the movie Colonel Joshua Chamberlain (played by Jeff Daniels), holds a hill that he and other soldiers were occupying. The situation was desperate. Outnumbered and out of ammunition, they had been given the charge to hold the hill no matter what. After a war is fought and won, strategists look to pinpoint a defining moment in the conflict. Every war comes down to a single defining battle, which comes down to a single group of soldiers, which comes down to a single military leader, who gives a single command, which changes everything. Many military historians believe the battle for “Little Round Top” was that defining moment and the turning point for winning of the Civil War.

As the scenes flashed by in my mind, the Lord began to speak to me about what would have happened if those soldiers had lost the hill. Things would have turned out much differently. Then He began speaking to me about the “hill” of 24/7 prayer, and how strategic it was, and how hard the enemy would fight to make sure that strategic hill would never be retaken by anyone. At first this discouraged me, until the Lord reassured me that indeed the hill of night and day prayer would be taken again, but not without a fight. This is because the enemy knows how important that particular hill is. It was at this time that I began to entertain the idea that the Lord might be saying it was the time to take the hill again.

Taking The High Ground

The “Hill of the Lord” represents going up higher. There is a higher place in the Lord that we as believers can all go personally, and corporately. Every one of us is given the opportunity to personally go higher with the Lord through daily interaction with Him. However, we as entire cities are also given the opportunity to ascend the hill of the Lord through the vehicle of unified, corporate, city-wide night and day prayer. Together as a ‘city-church’ we can go up into higher dimensions of love, truth, peace, miracles, and salvations, if we first believe, and then act on that faith by gathering together to seek the Lord. Nothing is impossible if we believe and ask! It is time to take the hill of the Lord through unified night and day prayer.

Cities of Prayer

Imagine a city where prayer and worship to Jesus goes up night and day without any moment or pause. Imagine a spiritual “Wall” of intercession that keeps a city covered 24/7 in the manifest Presence of the Lord. This can become a reality if we believe and

act. The time has come to put feet to our faith. Jerusalem is a prototype for the cities of the earth. We can claim her promise as ours. In city after city, God has already “Set” it in the hearts of His people to stand as watchmen day and night on the wall of worship and prayer. Read this scripture-promise below and insert the name of *your* city next to Jerusalem’s! Hear what God speaks:

“I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem (Salem!), which shall never hold their peace day nor night: you that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, until He establishes, and until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”
(Isaiah 62:6-7)

Our War With Amalek

The nation of Israel fought a battle with an ancient foe named “Amalek” that came to represent the battle between good and evil that we all must face. No one gets out of this battle. The way to fight it successfully is through gaining the high ground of prayer and worship. As Moses raised his hands in prayer to God, so must we fight this battle not with flesh and blood, but with the weapons of the Spirit that have been given to us. The problem is, we use spiritual weapons through these flesh and blood bodies that sometimes get tired. We need the help of our friends and countrymen if we expect to win anything more than personal struggles. Cities and nations are at stake, and that will take unified prayer and outreach efforts.

Exodus 17:8-16

*“Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said to Joshua, ‘Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow **I will stand on the top of the hill** with the rod of God in my hand.’ So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went **up to the top of the hill**. And so it was, **when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed**. But Moses’ hands became heavy; so 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 the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.’ And Moses built an altar and called its name, *The-LORD-Is-My-Banner*; for he said, ‘Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.’”*

Amalek represents the systems of this fallen world that are at unceasing war with God, His Kingdom, and His people. Not long after escaping Egypt and crossing the Red Sea, God gave three symbolic representations of Jesus in the wilderness of sin. They are found in Exodus Chapters, 15, 16, and 17. The first was at the bitter waters of Mara, where a “Tree” was cast into the waters making them “Sweet.” The tree represented the Cross of Jesus that make the bitter waters of this sin polluted life sweet again as God intended them to be (Ch 15). The second was the manna that fell in the wilderness for the hungry

sojourners, and represented Jesus the true Manna who was given that man might live by more than “bread alone” (Ch 16). The third was the rock that followed Israel in the desert and the Rock was Christ that satisfied the thirsty soul. The water that Jesus said if we drink, we would: “Never thirst again” (Ch 17).

In Exodus 17, immediately following the incident of striking the Rock, symbolizing Jesus being wounded for our transgressions (Isa 53:5), Amalek attacked the pilgrim Israelites. In his book *The City of God* early church father Saint Augustine declared that Amalek represented the “City of the World” in contrast to Israel who represented the “City of God.” The Jews believed that Amalek represented pure evil, or those who had submitted themselves fully to wickedness and its consequences, and especially to the darkness of sexual impurity. The City of The World and The City of God would be in constant conflict until the end of time. The Lord Himself seemed to confirm this spiritual picture by declaring that He would have continual warfare “throughout the generations” with the people of Amalek:

“...Because the LORD has sworn [sworn=Hebrew: “to lift the hand”]: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.” (Exodus 17:16 addition mine).

A Picture of Prayer

God was “lifting His hands” against Amalek. In this way, Moses was a picture (and channel) of God and His authority by doing the same thing. God was lifting His hands and so was Moses. Many times in the scriptures, the raising of the hands symbolizes prayer and worship to God. When we raise our hands, we are symbolically reaching out to God in appeal, and reaching up to him in worship. Someone once said that heaven was only “six inches above the head.” As Jesus said, heaven is always “at hand.” In many cultures, raising the hands is considered an act of submission and surrender. Like when the cowboy in the old west said: “Stick em up!”

*Neh 8:6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with **lifting up their hands**: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.*

*Psa 28:2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, **when I lift up my hands** toward thy holy oracle.*

*Psa 63:4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: **I will lift up my hands** in thy name.*

*Psa 119:48 My hands also **will I lift up** unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.*

*Psa 134:2 **Lift up your hands** in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.*

*Psa 141:2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and **the lifting up of my hands** as the evening sacrifice.*

*Lam 2:19 Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: **lift up thy hands** toward Him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.*

*Lam 3:41 Let us **lift up our heart with our hands** unto God in the heavens.*

*Heb 12:12 Wherefore **lift up the hands** which hang down, and the feeble knees;*

*1Ti 2:8 I will therefore that men **pray every where, lifting up holy hands**, without wrath and doubting.*

The Spirit Battle is Real

What appeared to be only a natural battle with Amalek was also a spirit battle. The one could not be won without the other. Israel's enemy Amalek would not be vanquished without subduing the demons that motivated and empowered them. They were actually being energized on the field of battle by the evil spirits they had willingly (or unknowingly) submitted to. No matter how strong or smart Israel was, in a very real way they needed spiritual intervention.

As long as Moses kept his hands raised during the conflict Israel prevailed. However, when he grew tired and could no longer hold them up, Israel began to lose the battle. Eventually Moses needed help and Aaron and Hur were called to hold his arms in the posture of prayer and worship. Why would God only allow Israel to win this battle only if Moses their leaders hands were raised? This physical requirement was a one time thing, and was not done because God was being unreasonable. God did this to paint a picture of the need of ongoing prayer and worship in the battle for human souls. The battle we fight is not only natural but spiritual, and the spiritual weapons of worship and prayer are required win this war. Required by God. Someone has wisely noted that: "If you set off a nuclear bomb, when the dust settles, the demon will still be standing there." Flesh answers to flesh, spirit answers to spirit:

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12)

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [natural, of the flesh] but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4 addition mine)

The Hill of the Lord and Psalm 24/7

*“A Psalm of David. The earth is the LORD’s, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell in it. For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters. Who may ascend into **the hill of the LORD**? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face. Selah. (Vs 24/7) **Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.** Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah”*

The question is more about the qualification of ascension, not the willingness of the individual. This moves the primary focus from our decision to His invitation. He has to beckon us to come into His Presence. And He has. The Hill of the Lord is the higher place that He wants us to go, and we have to decide to go. Nothing can stop you if He helps you, and nothing can help you until you decide to go. We cannot do His part and He will not do our part. We climb this Hill of transformation together, just as Jesus did with His disciples:

*“Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, **led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.** And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, ‘Arise, and do not be afraid.’ When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.” (Matthew 17:-8)*

Afraid of Change

We are creatures of habit, who don’t like change. And the older you get, the worse it seems to get, and the more you have to resist becoming “unchangeable.” Often we see what is available to us, but are afraid to make the necessary changes to acquire those things. This is what inspired men like Albert Einstein to declare: “The definition of insanity is to do the same thing over and over, and expect to get a different result.” Lately, God has been speaking to me again about our part in sustaining 24/7 prayer in the city of Salem. I have been feeling that a change was coming at the first of the year (Jan 1st, 2016). As I sought the Lord about reinstating night and day prayer, I asked for a dream to confirm what I was hearing and feeling. That night, The Lord answered me.

Dream of “Landslide” Song

In the dream I was standing in a kitchen bending over an old fashioned looking transistor style radio. I was tuning in a station to listen to a couple who were getting ready to sing a song they had performed together. They were saying that this was “The last time” that they were going to be singing this song. The song was called “Landslide” by Stevie Nicks. Here are the words:

*I took my love and took it down
I climbed a mountain and I turned around
And I saw my reflection in the snow-covered hills
Till the landslide brought me down*

*Oh, mirror in the sky, what is love?
Can the child within my heart rise above?
Can I sail through the changing ocean tides?
Can I handle the seasons of my life?*

*Well, I've been afraid of changing
'Cause I've built my life around you
But time makes you bolder
Even children get older
And I'm getting older too*

As I was listening to the song I was being greatly moved. Then I started to make breakfast. I was going to make an omelet or scrambled eggs. I remembered the saying: “If you’re going to make an omelet, you have to break a few eggs.” I understood this to mean that nothing of significance can happen without change and sometimes that change is painful or “breaks” a few things along the way. I then reached over to look for a frying pan, and found an old black cast iron skillet. I proceeded to crack the eggs.

Stevie Nicks was in Aspen Colorado at an especially difficult time of her life. Her long time boyfriend and song writing companion had left her. Her Father was in the hospital for surgery with the possibility of not coming out. And the singing career that she had worked so long and hard for was not taking off like she thought it would. She was at a turning point in her life. The mountains in front of her seemed to represent all her impossible challenges and they were screaming “Avalanche!” Everything within her was tired and wanted to give up. Her father told her he would pay for her to go to school or work or whatever she wanted to do. But her heart was to sing. She knew she was made to sing. Circumstances had caved in on her time and time again, but standing there staring at those snow capped mountains, she decided to try again. It was then she wrote the song Landslide. And it was that very song that launched her career and made her famous.

Sometimes we give up right before taking the hill that changes everything.

In Conclusion

Why did God choose to say He had a hill? The hill of the Lord represents the high and holy place of advantage. From it we can see more clearly the advances of God and the movements of the enemy. God set the Ark of His Presence on a hill. In a military engagement, the one who holds the hill wins the battle. If we are going to win the battle for our cities and states, we are going to have to choose to take the high ground of night and day prayer. There are many ways to do it, but nothing will substitute it.

I believe for Salem, and the Salem House of Prayer, it's time to take the hill. God's house is on a mountain. He calls His house a "House of Prayer" for all nations. One day, all men will flow into His house.

*"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days **that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it.** Many nations shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." (Micah 4:-2)*

*"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. **And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?'**" (Luke 18:1-8)*

Other Scripture References

Numbers 14:44-45 But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

1 Samuel 7:1 And the men of Kirjathjearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

1 Samuel 10:10 And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

Psa_2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

Psalms 3:4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill.
Selah.

Psalms 15:1 A Psalm of David. LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

Psalms 24:3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who shall stand in his holy place?

Psalms 43:3 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

Psalms 68:16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desires to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.

Psalms 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

SOS 4:6 Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

Isaiah 5:1 Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

Isaiah 30:25 And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

Ezekiel 34:26 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

Luke 9:37 And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.