



SWAT PRAYER

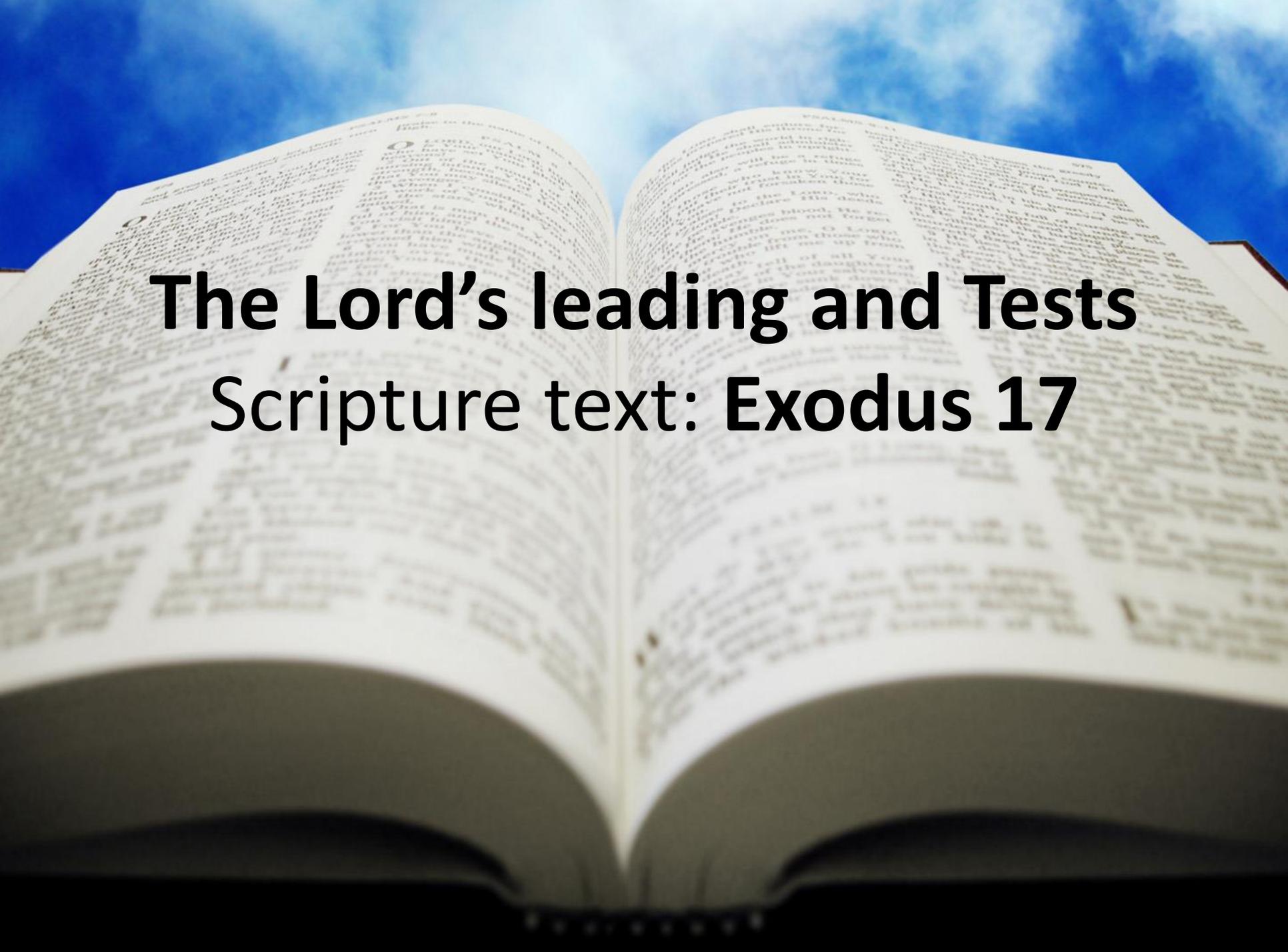
SPIRITUAL WARFARE ATTACK TEAM



STORMING THE GATES

Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, and the background is a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. The text is centered over the open pages.

The Lord's leading and Tests
Scripture text: **Exodus 17**

Exodus 17:1-3 All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

As Israel followed the leading of the Lord, they experienced tests and trials which helped them understand themselves better and see more fully the power and grace of God. There are three such experiences in chapters 17 and 18.

1. Water from the Rock (Exodus 17:1–7)

The congregation had thirsted before (Exodus 15:22) and **God had met their needs**, but, like people today, they forgot God's mercy. After all, **if they were in the place of God's leading, it was His responsibility to take care of them.**

Exodus 15:22-26 Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and **found no water**. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" And he cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, **and there he tested them**, saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, **for I am the LORD, your healer."**

The people criticized Moses and murmured against God, **a sin about which we are warned in 1 Cor. 10:1–12**. They were actually **“tempting the Lord”** by their attitude, for they were saying that God did not care and that He would not help them. **They were trying His patience** by their repeated complaints.

Moses illustrates what the trusting Christian does in the hour of trial: he turned to the Lord and asked for guidance (James 1:5)

1 Corinthians 10:1-6 For I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. **For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.** Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did.

1 Corinthians 10:7-12 Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. **We must not put Christ to the test**, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. **Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.**

James 1:2-8 **Count it all joy**, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, **that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing**. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who **gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him**. But let him **ask in faith**, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Exodus 17:5-7 And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I **will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.**" And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and **because they tested the LORD by saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"**

The Lord instructed him to take his rod and to smite the rock and water would come out. This rock is Christ (1 Cor. 10:4), and the smiting of the rock speaks of Christ's death on the cross, where He felt the rod of the curse of the law. (It was this same rod, you will recall, that turned into a serpent, Ex. 4:2–3, and that helped to bring the plagues on Egypt.) The order here is wonderful: in chap. 16 we have the manna, illustrating Christ's coming to earth; in chapter 17 we **see the smiting of the rock, which pictures His death on the cross.** The water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who was given after Christ had been glorified (John 7:37–39).

John 7:37-41 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This really is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee?"

Read Num. 20:1–13 for a second experience with the rock.

God commanded Moses to speak to the rock, but in his self-will, Moses smote the rock. Then, because of this sin, he was not permitted to enter Canaan. **By once again striking the rock, Moses spoiled the type—Christ can die only once.** See Rom. 6:9–10 and Heb. 9:26–28.

The Spirit was given once, but the believer may receive added fillings by asking God.

Romans 6:9-14 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, **will never die again**; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, **once for all**, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. **For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.**

Hebrews 9:24-28 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

First Corinthians 10:4 says that Israel “drank of that spiritual rock that followed them.” Some have interpreted this to mean that the smitten rock traveled with the Jews through the wilderness, but this explanation is unlikely.

The word “them” is not in the original Greek text; the sentence says that they drank of the water from the rock, and that this event followed the giving of the manna (cf. 1 Cor. 10:3 with Ex. 16).

2. Warfare with the Enemy (17:8–16)

The new Christian sometimes is amazed that the Christian life is one of battles as well as blessings.

Up to this point, Israel had not had to fight; the Lord had fought for them (13:17). But now, the Lord chose to fight through them to overcome the enemy. The Amalekites were descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:12, 16) **and can illustrate the opposition of the flesh** (Gen. 25:29–34). Israel was delivered from the world (Egypt) once and for all by crossing the Red Sea, but God's people will always battle the flesh until Christ returns.

Note that the Amalekites did not appear until after the water was given; **for when the Holy Spirit comes in to dwell, then the flesh begins to oppose Him** (Gal. 5:17ff). Deuteronomy 25:17–19 tells us that the Amalekites pulled a “sneak attack” and came up from the rear. **As Christians we must always “watch and pray.”**

Galatians 5:16-17 But I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

Deuteronomy 25:17-19 "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you came out of Egypt, how he attacked you on the way when you were faint and weary, and cut off your tail, those who were lagging behind you, and he did not fear God. Therefore when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your enemies around you, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you shall not forget.

How did Israel overcome the enemy?

They had an intercessor on the mountain and a commander in the valley! Moses' role on the mountain illustrates the intercessory work of Christ, and **Joshua with his sword illustrates the Spirit of God using the Word of God against the enemy** (Heb. 4:12 and Eph. 6:17–18).

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Ephesians 6:14-18 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and **the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

Of course, Moses is an imperfect picture of Christ and His intercessory work, since our Lord never wearies and needs no assistance (Heb. 4:16; 9:24).

Paul says that believers can “help together by prayer” (2 Cor. 1:11), which is what Aaron and Hur did. Moses had the rod of God in his hand, which speaks of God’s almighty power. Moses had defeated every enemy in Egypt, just as Christ has overcome the world in mighty victory.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then **with confidence draw near to the throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, **but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.**

2 Corinthians 1:8-11 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. **For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.**

Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But **that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.** He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. **You also must help us by prayer,** so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

It is important that God's people cooperate with God in gaining victory over the flesh.

Romans 6 tells us to reckon and to yield, and by faith to put to death the deeds of the body.

Moses alone on the mount could not win the battle, nor could Joshua alone on the battlefield: victory required both of them. How wonderful that we have the interceding Son of God who is for us (Rom. 8:34), and the indwelling Spirit of God who is for us (Rom. 8:26), plus the inspired Word of God in our hearts!

Romans 8:26-30 Likewise **the Spirit helps us in our weakness**. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but **the Spirit himself intercedes for us** with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And **we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose**. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Romans 8:33-37 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? **It is God who justifies.** Who is to condemn? **Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." **No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.**

Note that Joshua did not completely destroy the Amalekites; he “discomfited” them (***Exodus 17:13*** *And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.*).

The flesh will never be destroyed or “eradicated” in this life; Christ will give us new bodies when He returns (Phil. 3:21).

Philippians 3:20-21 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body,** by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

In 1 Sam. 15 we will see that Saul's sin was in refusing to deal completely with the Amalekites; and 2 Sam. 1:6–10 informs us that it was one of the Amalekites Saul spared that killed him!

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.**

Jehovah-Nissi means “The Lord our banner.” We have our victory not through our own efforts but through Christ alone (John 16:33; 1 John 2:13–14; 5:4–5).

2 Samuel 1:6-10 And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and there was Saul leaning on his spear, and behold, the chariots and the horsemen were close upon him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, '**I am an Amalekite.**' And he said to me '**Stand beside me and kill me, for anguish has seized me, and yet my life still lingers.**' So I stood beside him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."

John 16:30-33 Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God."

Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? Behold, **the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered**, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. **Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace.** In the world you will have tribulation. **But take heart; I have overcome the world."**

1 John 2:12-14 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, **because you have overcome the evil one.** I write to you, children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. **I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.**

1John 5:1-5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And **this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**