

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 17

The children of Israel coming to Rephidim, want water, and chide with Moses about it, who, crying to the Lord, is bid to smite the rock, from whence came water for them, and he named the place from their contention with him, (^{<0270>}Exodus 17:1-7) at this place Amalek came and fought with Israel, who, through the prayer of Moses, signified by the holding up of his hands, and by the sword of Joshua, was vanquished, (^{<0270>}Exodus 17:8-13), for the remembrance of which it was ordered to be recorded in a book, and an altar was built with this inscription on it, “Jehovahnissi”: it being the will of God that Amalek should be fought with in every generation until utterly destroyed, (^{<0274>}Exodus 17:14-16).

Ver. 1. *And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin*, etc.] Where they had stayed some time, at least a week, as it should seem, from the gathering the manna there six days, and resting on the seventh:

after their journeys: first from the wilderness of Sin to Dophkah, and from Dophkah to Alusb, and from Alush to Rephidim, as appears from (^{<0392>}Numbers 33:12-14) their two stations at Dophkah and Alush are here omitted, nothing very remarkable or of any moment happening at either place:

according to the commandment; or “mouth of the Lord”^{f535}, who, either with an articulate voice out of the cloud, ordered when they should march, and where they should encamp; or else this was signified by the motion or rest of the pillar of cloud or fire, which always went before them, in which the Lord was:

and pitched in Rephidim; which was a place on the western side of Mount Sinai: according to Bunting^{f536}, Dophkah was twelve miles from the wilderness of Sin, and Alush twelve miles from Dophkah, and Rephidim eight miles from Alush: and Jerom says^{f537}, according to the propriety of the Syriac language, it signifies a remission of hands: and to which the Targum of Jonathan seems to have respect, adding,

“the place where their hands ceased from the precepts of the law, wherefore the fountains were dried up;”

and it follows:

and there was no water for the people to drink; being a sandy desert place.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore the people did chide with Moses*, etc.] Contended with him by words, expostulating with him in a very angry and indecent manner for bringing them thither; loading him with reproaches and calumnies, wrangling and quarrelling with him, and using him very ill, giving hard words and bad language:

and said, give us water, that we may drink; directing their speech both to Moses and Aaron, as the word “give”^{f538} being in the plural number shows; which was requiring that of them which only God could do and signifying as if they were under obligation to do it for them, since they had brought them out of Egypt, and had the care of them; and having seen so many miracles wrought by them, might conclude it was in their power to get them water when they pleased: had they desired them to pray to God for them, to give them water, and exercised faith on him, that he would provide for them, they had done well; which they might reasonably conclude he would, who had brought them out of Egypt, led them through the Red sea, had sweetened the waters at Marah for them, conducted them to fountains of water at Elim, and had rained flesh and bread about their tents in the wilderness of Sin, and still continued the manna with them:

and Moses said unto them, why chide ye with me? as if it was I that brought you hither, whereas it is the Lord that goes before you in the pillar of cloud and fire, and as if I kept water from you, or could give it you at pleasure; how unreasonable, as well as how ungenerous is it in you to chide with me on this account

wherefore do you tempt the Lord? the Lord Christ, as appears from (<4510>1 Corinthians 10:9) who with the Father and Spirit is the one Jehovah; him they tempted or tried; they tried whether he was present with them or not, (<4217>Exodus 17:7), they tried his power, whether he could give them water in a dry and desert land; and they tried his patience by chiding with his servants, and showing so much distrust of his power and providence, of his goodness and faithfulness; and by their wretched ingratitude and rebellion they tempted him to work a miracle for them.

Ver. 3. *And the people thirsted there for water*, etc.] They saw there was no water when they first came thither, and therefore chid Moses for bringing them to such a place, where they could not subsist; and having stayed some little time here, and all the water they brought with them from Alush being spent, and having none to drink, began to be very thirsty:

and the people murmured against Moses; became more impatient and enraged, and threw out their invectives against him with much acrimony and severity:

wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt? where it would have been much better for us to have continued:

to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst: which is intolerable to any, and especially to children and cattle, which require frequent drinking: they could not suppose that Moses had such a murderous view in bringing them out of Egypt, or that this was his intention in it, but that this would be the issue and event of it.

Ver. 4. *And Moses cried unto the Lord*. etc.] Or prayed unto him, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; which shows the distress he was thrown into, the vehemence of his prayer, and perhaps the loud and lamentable tone in which he expressed it: this was the method he always took, and the refuge he fled unto in all his times of trouble; in which he did well, and set a good example of piety and devotion to God, of faith and trust in him: saying,

what shall I do unto this people? or, “for this people”^{f539}; to relieve them in their present exigency; suggesting his own inability to do any thing for them: yet not despairing of relief, but rather expressing faith in the power and goodness of God to keep them, by his application to him; desiring that he would open a way for their help, and direct him what he must do in this case for them: something, he intimates, must be done speedily for the glory of God, for his own safety, and to prevent the people sinning yet more and more, and so bring destruction upon them; for, adds he,

they be almost ready to stone me or, “yet a little, and they will stone me”^{f540}; if the time of help is protracted, if relief is not in a short time given, he had reason to believe from the menaces they had given out, the impatience they had showed, the rage they were in, they would certainly take up stones and stone him, being in a stony and rocky place; and this they would do, not as a formal punishment of him as a false prophet, telling them they

should be brought to Canaan, when they were brought into the wilderness and perishing there; which law respecting such an one was not yet in being; but this he supposed as what an enraged multitude was wont to do, and which was more ready at hand for them to do than anything else, (see ~~Exodus~~ Exodus 8:26).

Ver. 5. *And the Lord said unto Moses*, etc.] Out of the pillar of cloud:

go on before the people, lead them on nearer to Mount Sinai or Horeb, within sight of which they now were. Jarchi adds, by way of explanation, “and see if they will stone thee”; fear not, go on boldly, no harm shall come to thee:

and take with thee of the elders of Israel; some of them for a witness, as the above writer observes, that they may see that by thine hand water comes out of the rock, and may not say there were fountains there from the days of old. These were taken, because they were the principal men among the people, who, as they were men of years, so of prudence and probity, and whose veracity might be depended upon; and since so great a multitude could not all of them see the miracle, the rock being smote, and the water only flowing in one part of it, and perhaps the road to it but narrow, it was proper some persons should be singled out as witnesses of it, and who so proper as the elders of the people?

and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand and go; wherewith the river Nile was smitten, and the water became blood, when Moses and Aaron first went to Pharaoh; and which, though smitten by Aaron, yet being with the rod of Moses, and by his order, is attributed to him; or else with which the Red sea was smitten by Moses, and divided; which being but a narrow channel, or an arm of the sea, might be called a river: and this circumstance is observed, as the afore mentioned writer thinks, to let the Israelites know, that the rod was not, as they thought, only designed for inflicting punishment, as on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but also for bringing good unto them; and when they saw this in his hand, by which so many miracles had been wrought, they might be encouraged to hope that something was going to be done in their favour, and that water would be produced for them to drink.

Ver. 6. *Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb*, etc.] Or “upon that rock”^{f541}, a particular rock which was pointed unto, where the Lord in the pillar of cloud would stand; not as a mere spectator of this

affair, but as a director of Moses where to smite the rock; and to exert his power in producing water from it, and by his presence to encourage Moses to do it, and to expect and believe the issue of it:

and thou shalt smite the rock: or “on the rock”, or “in it”, ^{f542}; which made Jarchi fancy that the rod of Moses was something very hard, that it was a sapphire by which the rock was cleft:

and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink, they, their children, and their cattle, ready to die for thirst. Thus God showed himself gracious and merciful to a murmuring and ungrateful people:

and Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel; he smote the rock with his rod, and the waters gushed out in great abundance, like streams and rivers, for the refreshment of the people, and their flocks, (^{<B88D>}Psalm 78:20 105:41). The Heathens have preserved some footsteps of this miracle in their writings, though disguised. Pausanias ^{f543} speaks of a fountain of cold water springing out of a rock, and reports how Atalantes, coming from hunting thirsty, smote a rock with his spear, and water flowed out. This rock at Rephidim, and the apertures through which the waters flowed, are to be seen to this day, as travellers of veracity relate. Monsieur Thevenot ^{f544} says the rock at Rephidim is only a stone of a prodigious height and thickness, rising out of the ground: on the two sides of that stone we saw several holes, by which the water hath run, as may be easily known by the prints of the water, which hath much hollowed it, but at present no water issues out of them. A later traveller ^{f545} gives us a more distinct account of it: after we had descended the western side of this Mount (Sinai), says he, we came into the plain or wilderness of Rephidim, where we saw that extraordinary antiquity, the rock of Meribah, which was continued to this day, without the least injury from time or accidents. This is rightly called, from its hardness, (^{<B88D>}Deuteronomy 8:15), *çyml j h rwx*, “a rock of flint”, though, from the purple or reddish colour of it, it may be rather rendered the rock of *µl j* or *hml j a*, amethyst, or the amethystine, or granite rock. It is about six yards square, lying tottering as it were, and loose, near the middle of the valley, and seems to have been formerly a cliff of Mount Sinai, which hangs in a variety of precipices all over this plain; the water which gushed out, and the stream which flowed withal, (^{<B88D>}Psalm 78:20) have hollowed across one corner of this rock, a channel about two inches deep, and twenty wide, all over incrustated like the inside of a tea kettle that has been long used. Besides several mossy productions

that are still preserved by the dew, we see all over this channel a great number of holes, some of them four or five inches deep, and one or two in diameter, the lively and demonstrative tokens of their having been formerly so many fountains. Neither could art nor chance be concerned in the contrivance, inasmuch as every circumstance points out to us a miracle; and, in the same manner with the rent in the rock of Mount Calvary at Jerusalem, never fails to produce the greatest seriousness and devotion in all who see it. The Arabs, who were our guards, were ready to stone me in attempting to break off a corner of it: and another late traveller^{f546} informs us, that the stone called the stone of the fountains, or the solitary rock, is about twelve feet high, and about eight or ten feet broad, though it is not all of one equal breadth. It is a granite marble, of a kind of brick colour, composed of red and white spots, which are both dusky in their kind; and it stands by itself in the fore mentioned valley (the valley of Rephidim) as if it had grown out of the earth, on the right hand of the road toward the northeast: there remains on it to this day the lively impression of the miracle then wrought; for there are still to be seen the places where the water gushed out, six openings towards the southwest, and six towards the northeast; and in those places where the water flowed the clefts are still to be seen in the rock, as it were with lips. The account Dr. Pocock^{f547} gives of it is this,

“it is on the foot of Mount Seriah, and is a red granite stone, fifteen feet long, ten wide, and about twelve high: on both sides of it toward the south end, and at the top of it for about the breadth of eight inches, it is discoloured as by the running of water; and all down this part, and both sides, and at top, are a sort of openings and mouths, some of which resemble the lion’s mouth that is sometimes cut in stone spouts, but appear not to be the work of a tool. There are about twelve on each side, and within everyone is an horizontal crack, and in some also a crack down perpendicularly. There is also a crack from one of the mouths next to the hill, that extends two or three feet to the north, and all round to the south. The Arabs call this the stone of Moses; and other late travellers^{f548} say, that about a mile and a half, in the vale of Rephidim, is this rock; this, say they, is a vast stone, of a very compact and hard granite, and as it were projecting out of the ground; on both sides are twelve fissures, which the monk our guide applied to the twelve apostles, and possibly not amiss, had he joined the twelve tribes of

Israel with them: as we were observing these fissures, out of which the water gushed, one would be tempted to think, added he, it is no longer ago than yesterday the water flowed out; and indeed there is such an appearance, that at a distance one would think it to be a small waterfall lately dried up: and one ^{f549} that travelled hither in the beginning of the sixteenth century says, that to this day out of one of the marks or holes there sweats a sort of moisture, which we saw and licked.”

We are taught by the Apostle Paul the mystical and spiritual meaning of this rock, which he says was Christ, that is, a type of him, (~~400~~¹ Corinthians 10:4) as it was for his external unpromising appearance among men at his birth, in his life and death; for his height, being higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels of heaven, and than the heavens themselves, and for strength, firmness, and solidity. The water that flowed from this rock was typical of the grace of Christ, and the blessings of it, which flow from him in great abundance to the refreshment and comfort of his people, and to be had freely; and of the blood of Christ, which flowed from him when stricken and smitten. And the rock being smitten with the rod of Moses, typified Christ being smitten by the rod of the law in the hand of justice, for the transgressions of his people; and how that through his having being made sin, and a curse for them, whereby the law and justice of God are satisfied, the blessings of grace flow freely to them, and follow them all the days of their lives, as the waters of the rock followed the Israelites through the wilderness.

Ver. 7. *And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah,* etc.] The former signifies “temptation”, and the latter “contention”: the reason of which names being given by Moses, or whoever was the name of the place, follows: “because of the chiding of the children of Israel”; that was the reason why it was called by the last name, Meribah, because here, the Israelites chid and contended with Moses, and used him opprobriously:

and because they tempted the Lord; therefore it had the former name of Massah:

saying, is the Lord among us or not? as if they should say, if we perish through thirst, the Lord is not among us, nor takes any care of us; nor was it he that brought us out of Egypt, but Moses; nor is he in the pillar of cloud and fire, as is said; but if he works a miracle, and gives us water, for us, our children, and cattle, then it will appear he is among us; and thus

they tempted the Lord, though without this they had full proof, by many instances, that he was among them, and even in a very extraordinary manner.

Ver. 8. *Then came Amalek*, etc.] The Amalekites, who were not the posterity of Amalek, a son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, by Timna the concubine of Eliphaz, (⁽⁰¹³²⁾Genesis 36:12) who dwelt in the desert, to the south of Judea, beyond the city Petra, as you go to Aila, as Jerom says ^{f550}; and so the Targum of Jonathan describes them as coming from the south; and Aben Ezra interprets them a nation that inhabited the southern country. Josephus ^{f551} calls them the inhabitants of Gobolitis and Petra; but they were the descendants of Cush, and the same with those who were in Abraham's time long before Amalek, the descendant of Esau, was in being, (⁽⁰¹⁴⁷⁾Genesis 14:7) and who bordered eastward on the wilderness of Shur:

and fought with Israel in Rephidim; so that this was before they came from hence to Sinai, very probably as they were on the march thither, and before the rock was smitten, and they had been refreshed with water, and so while they were in distress for want of that, and therefore this must be a great trial and exercise to them. What should move the Amalekites to come and fight with them, is not easy to say; it is by many thought to be the old grudge of the children of Esau against the children of Israel, because of the affair of the birthright and blessing which Jacob got from Esau, who were now on their march for the land of Canaan, which came to him thereby: but it is hardly probable that these people should know anything of those matters at this distance, and besides were not of the race of Esau; and if anything of this kind was in remembrance, and still subsisted, it is most likely that the Edomites would have been concerned to stop them, rather than these: it is more probable, that these had heard of their coming out, of Egypt with great riches, the spoils of the Egyptians; and being an unarmed, undisciplined people, though numerous, thought to have taken this advantage against them of their distress and contentious, and plundered them of their wealth; unless we can suppose them to be an ally of the Canaanites, and so bound by treaty to obstruct their passage to the land of Canaan: but be it as it may; they came out against them, and fought with them without any provocation, the Israelites not attempting to enter their country, but rather going from it; for these seem to follow them, to come upon the back of them, and fall upon their rear, as appears from (⁽⁰²⁵⁷⁾Deuteronomy 25:17,18).

Ver. 9. *And Moses said unto Joshua*, etc.] The son of Nun, who was his minister, and was a man of war from his youth, trained up in the art of war, and afterwards succeeded Moses, and was captain of the armies of Israel, and fought at the head of them, and subdued the Canaanites. Moses knew he was a fit person for the present purpose, and therefore gave him the following orders:

choose us out men; the stoutest and most courageous, best able to bear arms, and engage in war; for the multitude in common was not qualified for such service, nor was there any necessity of engaging them all in it:

and go out; out of the camp, and meet them at some distance, that the women and children might not be terrified with the enemy:

fight with Amalek; for their cause was just, Amalek was the aggressor, Israel was on the defensive part; and should it be asked where they had arms to fight with, it may be remembered that the Egyptian army that was drowned in the Red sea, and whose bodies were cast upon the shore, might furnish them with a large quantity of armour, which they stripped them of, and arrayed themselves with:

tomorrow I will stand upon the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand: on the top of Mount Horeb or Sinai, where he might be seen by the army of Israel with that rod in his hand, lifted up as a banner, by which God had done so many wonderful things; and by which they might be encouraged to hope that victory would go on their side, and this he promised to do “tomorrow”, the day following; for sooner a select body of men could not be taken out from the people, and accoutred for war, and go forth to meet the enemy.

Ver. 10. *So Joshua did as Moses had said to him*, etc.] He singled out some proper persons for the battle, and arrayed them with armour, and led them forth out of the camp, and went forth at the head of them:

and fought with Amalek; upon both armies meeting, a battle ensued:

and Moses, Aaron, and Hur, went up to the top of the hill; to the top of Mount Sinai or Horeb, not so much to see the battle fought, as to be seen by Joshua and the people of Israel, especially Moses with the rod in his hand lifted up, that they might behold it, and be encouraged through it to hope for and expect victory; and the other two went up with him to assist him in holding up his hands with the rod, as appears by what follows.

Aaron, it is well known, was his brother, but who Hur was is not so clear, though no doubt a very eminent and principal man. There was an Hur, the son of Caleb, who descended from Judah in the line of Phares and Hezron, and which Hur was the grandfather of Bezaleel (^{<33B>}1 Chronicles 2:5,9,19,20), but whether the same with this cannot be said with certainty; it is most likely that he was the husband of Miriam, as Josephus says ^{f552}, and so the brother-in-law of Moses and Aaron; though some Jewish writers say ^{f553} that he was their sister's son, the son of Miriam.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed,* etc.] With his rod in it as a banner displayed, as some think, which inspired the Israelites with courage to fight, and they had the better of it; though Aben Ezra rejects that notion, observing, that if that had been the case, Aaron or Hur would have lifted it up, or fixed it in a high place on the mount, that it might have been seen standing; and therefore he thinks the sense of the ancients the most correct, that it was a prayer gesture. And among the Heathens, Moses was famous for the efficacy of his prayers; Numenius, the Pythagoric philosopher ^{f554}, says of him, that he was a man very powerful in prayer with God: and so all the Targums interpret it, and particularly the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the words,

“when Moses lift up his hands in prayer, the house of Israel prevailed, but when he restrained his hands from prayer, the house of Amalek prevailed,”

as it follows:

when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed; so that victory seemed to go sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, according as the hand of Moses, with the rod in it, was held up or let down; when it was held up, and Israel saw it, they fought valiantly, but when it was let down, and they could not see it, their hearts failed them, and they feared it portended ill to them, which caused them to give way to the enemy. The spiritual Israel of God are engaged in a warfare with spiritual enemies, some within, and some without; and sometimes they prevail over their enemies, and sometimes their enemies prevail over them for a while; and things go on very much as a man either keeps up or leaves off praying, which is signified by the lifting up of holy hands without wrath and doubting, (^{<54B>}1 Timothy 2:8) and which when rightly performed, under the influence of the divine Spirit in faith, in sincerity, and with fervency and constancy, has great power with God and Christ, and against Satan and every spiritual enemy.

Ver. 12. *But Moses's hands were heavy*, etc.] And hung down through weariness, holding up the rod first in one hand, and then in another, for so long a time; and thus sometimes, through infirmity, the best of men grow remiss in prayer, their hands are weak and hang flown through the corruptions of their hearts, the power of unbelief, the temptations of Satan, and want of immediate answers of prayer, or through long delays of it, and then the enemy gets an advantage over them:

and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; so that it seems not only that his hands were heavy, but he could not well stand on his feet any longer, being a corpulent man as well as in years, as Ben Gersom suggests; and therefore Aaron and Hur took a stone that lay on the mount for him to sit upon, where he might be raised as high, and be as well seen, as standing: this stone may be an emblem of Christ the stone of Israel, the foundation of his people, their prop and support, which sustains and upholds them, their Ebenezer, or stone of help in all their times of difficulty and distress:

and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; the one was on his right, and the other on his left; and when the rod was in his right hand, he that was on that side held up that; and when it was in his left hand, he that was on the left side supported that: these may be an emblem of Christ, and of the Spirit of Christ, from whom the saints have their supports and assistance in prayer: Aaron the priest may represent Christ, from whose blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and from whose advocacy, mediation, and intercession, the people of God receive much encouragement and strength in their addresses at the throne of grace: and Hur, who has his name from a word which signifies freedom and liberty, may be an emblem of the Holy Spirit of God; who helps the saints in prayer under all their infirmities, and makes intercession for them, by filling their hearts and mouths with arguments, and is a free spirit to them; by whom they are upheld, and where he is there is liberty, and a soul can come forth in prayer to God, and in the exercise of grace with freedom:

and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun; when the victory was decided in favour of Israel; this may denote steadiness of faith in prayer, the constant performance of it, and continuance in it as long as a man lives.

Ver. 13. *And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.*] Amalek being distinguished from “his people”, has led some to think that Amalek was the name of the king, or general of the army, and that it was a common name to the kings of that nation, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt; but for this there is no foundation in the Scriptures: as Amelek signifies the Amalekites, his people may design the confederates and auxiliaries, the other people, as Ben Gersom expresses it, they brought with them to fight against Israel. And so Jerom^{f555} says, by him another Canaanite dwelt, who also fought against Israel in the wilderness, of whom it is so written, and Amalek and the Canaanite dwelt in the valley, (~~<01425>~~Numbers 14:25) and who were all, the one as the other, at least the greatest part of them, cut to pieces by the edge of the sword of Joshua and the Israelites, who obtained a complete victory over them; as the spiritual Israel of God will at last over all their spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, the world, and death.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto Moses,* etc.] After the battle was over, and the Israelites had got the victory:

write this for a memorial in a book: not in loose papers, but in a book, that it might continue; meaning that the account of this battle with Amelek should be put down in the annals or journal of Moses, in the book of the law he was writing, or was about to write, and would write, as he did, (see ~~<01007>~~Joshua 1:7,8) that so it might be kept in memory, and transmitted to the latest posterity; it being on the one hand an instance of great impiety, inhumanity, and rashness, in Amalek, and on the other a display of the goodness, kindness, and power of God on the behalf of his people: and

rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; who was a principal person concerned in this battle, and therefore, when the account was written and rehearsed, could bear witness to the truth of it, as well as he was to be the chief person that should be concerned in introducing the Israelites into the land of Canaan, and subduing the Canaanites; and therefore this, and what follows, was to be rehearsed to him, as the rule of his conduct toward them, and particularly Amalek:

for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amelek from under heaven; so that they shall be no more a nation, and their name never mentioned, unless with disgrace and contempt. This was fulfilled partly by Saul, (~~<01518>~~1 Samuel 15:8) and more completely by David, (~~<02007>~~1 Samuel 30:17 ~~<01000>~~2

Samuel 1:1 8:12), and the finishing stroke the Jews give to Mordecai and Esther, as the Targum of Jerusalem on (⁴¹⁷⁶Exodus 17:6).

Ver. 15. *And Moses built an altar*, etc.] On Horeb, as Aben Ezra; on the top of the hill, as Ben Gersom, where sacrifices of thanksgiving were offered up for the victory obtained, or however a monument erected in memory of it:

and he called the name of it Jehovahnissi; which signifies either “the Lord is my miracle” who wrought a miracle for them in giving them the victory over Amalek, as well as, through smiting the rock with the rod, brought out water from thence for the refreshment of the people, their children and cattle; or “the Lord is my banner”: alluding to the hands of Moses being lifted up with the rod therein, as a banner displayed, under which Joshua and Israel fought, and got the victory. This may fitly be applied to Christ, who is both altar, sacrifice, and priest, and who is the true Jehovah, and after so called; and who is lifted up as a banner, standard, or ensign in the everlasting Gospel, in order to gather souls unto him, and enlist them under him, and to prepare them for war, and encourage them in it against their spiritual enemies; and as a token of their victory over them, and a direction to them where they shall stand, when to march, and whom they shall follow; and to distinguish them from all other bands and companies, and for the protection of them from all their enemies, (see ²³¹¹⁰Isaiah 11:10). These words were inscribed upon the altar, or the altar was called the altar of Jehovahnissi, in memory of what was here done; from hence it has been thought ^{f556}, that Baachus, among the Heathens, had his name of Dionysius, as if it was Jehovahnyssaesus.

Ver. 16. *For he said, because the Lord hath sworn*, etc.] So some Jewish writers ^{f557} take it for an oath, as we do; or “because the hand is on the throne of the Lord” ^{f558}; which the Targum of Jonathan, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra, interpret of the hand of the Lord being lifted up, of his swearing by the throne of his glory; but, as Drusius observes, it is not credible that God should swear by that which is prohibited by Christ, (⁴¹²⁴Matthew 5:24 23:22) rather the words are to be rendered, “because the hand”, that is, the hand of Amalek, “is against the throne of the Lord” ^{f559}; against his people, among whom his throne was, and over whom he ruled, so against himself, and the glory of his majesty; because he was the first that made war upon Israel, when the Lord brought them out of Egypt, and unprovoked fell

upon their rear, and smote the hindmost, faint and weary among them: therefore

the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation; until they are utterly destroyed; and so in fact he had, and thus it was. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“he by his word will make war against those that are of the house of Amalek, and destroy them to three generations, from the generation of this world, from the generation of the Messiah, and from the generation of the world to come;”

and Baal Hatturim on the place observes, that this phrase, “from generation to generation”, by gematry, signifies the days of the Messiah. Amalek may be considered as a type of antichrist, whose hand is against the throne of God, his tabernacle, and his saints; who, with all the antichristian states which make war with the Lamb, will be overcome and destroyed by him.