When Moses Held Up His Hands

Revd Isaac Lawrence · April 2026

BIBLE REFERENCES Exodus 17:8-13 · 1 Thessalonians 5:17 · Ephesians 6:12

I was reflecting on that powerful moment in Exodus 17:8-13, when Israel was in battle against Amalek. Moses stood on the hill with the staff of God in his hands. As long as his hands were raised, Israel prevailed. But when his hands grew tired and began to fall, the enemy started to gain ground.

What a picture of prayer.

There are battles in life that cannot be won by strength, cleverness, or determination alone. Some battles are spiritual. Some struggles are deeper than what people can see. Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that our struggle is not merely against flesh and blood. This is why prayer matters so much. Prayer is not a small religious habit. Prayer is part of the battle.

When we keep turning to God, keep crying out to him, keep depending on him, there is strength, help, and victory in the spiritual realm. But when prayer fades, when we become weary, distracted, or silent, we often begin to feel the weight of the battle more deeply. We become vulnerable. We lose heart. The enemy loves prayerless people.

That is why 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, “pray without ceasing.” Not because God wants to burden us, but because he knows how much we need him.

Yet this passage also teaches something else that is deeply moving: Moses could not do it alone. When his arms became heavy, Aaron and Hur stood beside him and held up his hands. Their support helped secure the victory.

We all need that. We all need people who will stand with us in prayer when we are too tired to stand on our own. We need faithful friends, believing family, and prayer partners who will help hold us up before God. Sometimes victory comes not only because we prayed, but because others prayed for us when we had no strength left.

So the question is this: Whose hands are you helping to hold up? And just as importantly: Who is holding up yours?

Never underestimate prayer. Never underestimate the power of praying people. And never forget that some victories only come when God’s people keep their hands lifted to heaven.