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THE LORD OUR BATTLE FLAG

D.B. KNOX

"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

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The visit this week by President Sadat of Egypt to Israel brings to mind the journey of the first Israelites from Egypt to the promised land. Shortly after the pilgrims had crossed the Red Sea they were attacked by the Amalakites, a wandering nomadic tribe. And Moses, the Israelite leader, who was getting on in years, appointed a young man named Joshua to be the captain of the Israelites. Interestingly enough his name Joshua is the Hebrew for Jesus and both words mean 'the Lord the Saviour'. The battle against the Amalakites lasted all day. Moses watched it from a neighbouring hill lifting up his hands to God. While he prayed the Israelites were winning. Whenever he stopped the Amalakites had the better of it but Moses's brother and his brother-in-law helped him to maintain his prayer and at the end of the day the Israelites were completely victorious.

In giving thanks for the victory, Moses named the place 'the Lord is our battle flag' because it was through God that the victory was won. (Exodus 17:16) This first battle in which the Israelites engaged as a nation symbolises the battle which you and I as members of God's people are engaged in throughout life. For we are not fighting human brigands but spiritual brigands, powers of evil. Prayer is the great instrument for obtaining the help of God to bring this fight to a successful conclusion. I don't know what your problem may be, what troubles you may be undergoing but troubles are instigated by the devil, but they only overtake us as opportunities for winning the victory for God. Constant prayer is the way for victory and God is our battle flag behind whose leadership we advance to overcome the problems which we find ourselves in from day to day.

Jesus Christ is described as the Christian's battle flag by the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 11:10,11) because Jesus is the mighty God, the everlasting father (Isaiah 9:6). He is God the Saviour. He has overcome evil completely through his death and resurrection and with him as our head, each of us will overcome if we tackle our problems and troubles prayerfully, without giving up doing what is right. In this way Satan and his host, like the Amalakites, are driven off the field and God's cause triumphs in our life. But we must pray continually, and we must follow Christ our Joshua. These are the two secrets of success for overcoming the troubles of life through which Satan has been allowed to attack us. Continued prayer and following Jesus will ensure victory at the end of the day.

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