

Jehovah Nissi - The Lord Our Banner of Victory

As we come together today, we are reminded of our faith's rich tapestry woven throughout Scripture. Among its many threads is the profound name of God: Jehovah Nissi, the Lord our Banner. This name speaks of God's omnipotent presence in our lives and the victorious stand we can take as his children. Today, let us deeply reflect on what it means to have the Lord as our banner, using the narratives of Moses, Jesus Christ, and His resurrection as guideposts.

Moses: The Banner Raised in Prayer: The story of Moses in Exodus 17:8-13 (KJV) introduces us to a powerful scene of spiritual warfare:

8 Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

9 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

10 So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

12 But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

13 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

In this passage, we witness a multi-faceted warfare strategy: physical combat led by Joshua, spiritual warfare reliant on Moses' intercession. Moses' raised hands are not just a posture of prayer; they symbolize a banner of divine visibility and reliance on God. The raising of his staff, which represents God's authority, acts as a signal for victory. When we think of Moses on the hill, we see a man who embodies the very essence of leadership – the realization that personal strength is not enough. When he grows weary, the battle falters, illustrating a vital truth: we need a support system. Aaron and Hur become instrumental here, displaying the need for community in spiritual battles.

Spiritual Parallels and Modern Revelations: The significance of Moses' raised hands runs deeper than mere victory in battle; it reflects the nature of our walk with God. How often do we find ourselves raising our concerns to God, only to grow weary? Our hands, heavy with burdens, may fall, leading us to doubt and despair. But God provides us with Aaron and Hur — those who uphold us in prayer, encouraging us to trust in His supremacy.

We can draw parallels to the church today. Just as battlefields require soldiers who stand in solidarity, our spiritual journeys need community. Hebrews 10:24-25 (KJV) urges us:

*24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

When we gather—simply coming together for worship, prayer, or support—we are wave after wave lifting the banner of Christ higher, a beacon of hope in a world filled with trials.

Jesus as the Ensign for the Nations: Transitioning from Moses, we must recognize that Jesus Christ fulfills the prophetic declaration from Isaiah 11:10 (KJV):

10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

Jesus as “the Root of Jesse” indicates His humble origin yet profound impact. He emerges from the lineage of David—a king of victories—yet brings forth a radically different kind of kingdom. His role as the “ensign (nes, banner, same word as in Exodus 17) for the nations” implies that He is a banner of hope not just for Israel but for all humanity. This fulfills God’s promise that salvation extends beyond borders, cultures, and histories. In Jesus, we see the fulfillment of God’s desire for all people to be drawn to Him. His life, teachings, and ultimately His sacrifice on the cross act as a global call – an invitation to join under His banner for eternal life.

Reflecting on the Iwo Jima Example: The Battle of Iwo Jima lasted from February 19 to March 26, 1945, and was a critical part of World War II. Approximately 6,800 U.S. Marines lost their lives, while around 20,000 Japanese soldiers were killed or captured during the battle. The raising of the American flag on Mount Suribachi on February 23, 1945, became an iconic symbol of American resolve and sacrifice. The iconic photograph of the soldiers raising the American flag at Iwo Jima serves as a potent metaphor. It was not simply a flag raised atop a hill but a symbol of sacrifice, unity, and hope during a turbulent time in history. It became a rallying point for citizens, an embodiment of the nation's resilience and collective spirit. People rallied around that flag in moments of triumph and despair, drawing inspiration and courage from what it represented.

When we think of Iwo Jima, we can draw important parallels to our Christian journey. The American flag became a symbol of freedom and the sacrifices made to secure it.

Similarly, Jesus, as our banner, signifies the ultimate freedom from sin and death. The soldiers who raised the flag did so knowing that it signified both victory and the cost of that victory. Consider the moment when the flag was raised: the struggles faced by the soldiers were palpable, yet the act of raising the flag transformed the narrative. Similarly, when Christ declared "It is finished" as He hung on the cross (John 19:30 KJV), He activated a banner of victory for all believers. This proclamation not only declared His victory over sin but also opened the door for a new identity in Him, a true belonging to all who accept His salvation.

Living Under the Resurrection Banner: The resurrection is not merely an event; it is the pivotal moment that reinforces our identity as "more than conquerors" (Romans 8:37 KJV). In John 20:19-20 (KJV), we see the power of the resurrected Christ:

*19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.
20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.*

The disciples, filled with fear and uncertainty, encountered the risen Jesus, and their perspective shifted dramatically. Their fears were displaced by joy, and their despair turned into hope. The resurrection exemplifies that no darkness can extinguish the light of Christ, and every moment we feel defeated is an opportunity for Him to make us aware of His resurrection power. When Jesus appears to the disciples, He shows them His wounds – evidence of His suffering. Yet, it is in the very wounds and His victory over death that we find our greatest assurance. We recognize that Jesus is not a distant figure; He understands our struggles, our fears, and our battles. In moments of doubt or when the enemies of our souls attack, we can find strength by remembering that we serve a risen Savior. He stands before us, a banner of hope, reminding us of the victory He has already secured. 1 Corinthians 15:55-57 (KJV) proclaims:

*55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?
56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.
57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The Call to Action Under Jehovah Nissi: The title Jehovah Nissi encapsulates our experience in both triumph and trial. As we stand under the banner of Christ, we are called to reflect His light and love to a world in need. Just as the American flag represented values such as courage, sacrifice, and unity, we too must embody the characteristics of Christ's banner.

In Philippians 2:14-16 (KJV), we read:

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life...

We are called to shine brightly, holding up the "word of life" as symbols of hope. Each conversation, act of kindness, and demonstration of love is a way to elevate His banner in our communities.

Engaging with Our Community: The lessons we have learned can be practically applied through service and engagement in our local communities. Many around us feel lost, much like the disciples before the resurrection. They may not know the hope and freedom that comes with standing under the banner of Christ. We have the privilege and responsibility to invite others to join the ranks of His followers. In our everyday interactions, we can ask ourselves: How can I lift someone up today? How can I come alongside those who are weary and encourage them to raise their hands in prayer and purpose, even when they feel like they can't? We are not merely passive observers in this divine warfare; we are active participants, channeling God's love and grace to those around us.

Conclusion: Rallying Under Jehovah Nissi: As we conclude our reflection on Jehovah Nissi, let us reaffirm our commitment to living under His banner. In every challenge we face, let us remember that God is our strength. He empowers us not only to stand firm in our faith but to extend that faith to others who need hope and light.