

## *Jehovah Nissi*

### “The LORD is My Banner”

*“Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephadim. So Moses said to Joshua, ‘Choose men for us, and go out, fight against Amelek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill (figurative of heavenly places) with the staff of God in my hand.’ And Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amelek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy. And they took a stone (Jesus our Rock) and put it under him, and he sat on it, and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on the one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write this in a book as a memorial, and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.’ And Moses built an altar, and named it “JEHOVAH NISSI-THE LORD IS MY BANNER.” Exodus 17:8-15*

Jehovah Nissi can be literally translated, “The Lord our Banner” or “The Lord’s victory, our victory.” Jehovah-Nissi (3071) is a compound name coming from Jehovah (3065), a covenant name of God and Nissi (5251). Nissic (nace); is a flag, banner or standard, a rod, pole or ensign; also a sail; by implication, a flagstaff; generally a signal; figuratively, a token. It comes from the Hebrew word nacac (5264) (naw-sas’); a primitive root; to gleam from afar, i.e. to be conspicuous as a signal; or rather perhaps a denominative from 5251 [and identical with 5263, through the idea of a flag as fluttering in the wind]; to raise a beacon: KJV-- lift up as an ensign.

A banner was very significant in Hebrew life, especially in times of battle. It was a well-understood signal which was exhibited on top of a pole from a bare mountain top. The word “nissi” denotes that which is conspicuous and easily seen. “All you inhabitants of the world and dwellers on the earth, as soon as a standard is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and as soon as the trumpet is blown, you will hear it.” (Isaiah 18:3) “...until you are left as a flag on a mountain top, and as a signal on a hill.” (Isaiah 30:17) The banner represented God’s presence and His cause as well as a symbol of His deliverance and mighty salvation. Linked with God’s covenant name, the rod was a symbol and pledge of God’s leadership and strength in the battle. Jesus is our Banner of Victory. He was raised up on a cross as our banner and is our promise of victory over all of our foes.

The banner or standard of the Lord is raised up as a sign and marker to all who look upon Him and come to Him. One of the meanings of the name “Nissi” means to glisten, shining and glorious. It was used of the Hebrews to speak of the miraculous. It is the light shining on a hill as a beacon calling all who see it come into his warmth and protection. It is a rallying point and banner of victory in times of battle against the enemy. In Nehemiah 4:20, the people were instructed that “At whatever point you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us.” The banner marks that rallying point where God’s people are to gather together in time of war. It is the sign that the Lord of hosts, the Lord of the Armies of Heaven is ready to march into battle to vanquish His foes and defeat all His enemies. (See Jer. 4:6; Isa 13:2; 49:22)

The Nissi is a rallying point which separates and identifies oneself as being a part of God’s tribe. “The sons of Israel shall camp, each by his own standard, with the banners of their fathers’ households; they shall camp around the tent of meeting at a distance.” (Numbers 2:2)

Scripturally, the banner was raised to perform the following functions:

1. As a standard of God's victory on behalf of His people. God raises a banner to summon His people to come and fight victoriously. The banner is raised to assemble His people and cause them to rally together to fight in unity as part of the army of the Lord of Hosts. In the Old Testament days, the people had banners around which they gathered as a means of identity in battle. It was a flag or pole which was visible to the whole group. God is the standard to which all human life must gather continually. God is our banner of identity, our flag of victory, our pole of gathering. When the battle rages fiercely around us, we are to stay with the "standard". **Satan is terrified when he sees the banner of God flying high because it is a sure sign of his defeat.** "And the Assyrian will fall by a sword not of man, and a sword not of man will devour him. So he will not escape the sword, and his young men will become forced laborers. And his rock will pass away because of panic, and his princes will be terrified at the standard," declares the Lord, whose fire is in Zion and whose furnace is in Jerusalem." (Isa. 31:9, see also Isaiah 33:17-24). The Song of Solomon speaks of the awesomeness of an army with banners. (Song of Solomon 6:4) One can imagine the terror struck in the hearts of the enemies of God when they saw the armies of the Lord charging forward with banners of victory waving over their heads.
2. Nissi is a sign by which to draw His people to through love and truth. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." (John 12:33) I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore, I have drawn you with lovingkindness. Again I will rebuild you and you shall be rebuilt..." (Jer. 31:3,4a) "He has brought me to His banqueting table, His banner over me is love." (Song of Songs 2:4) "Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten when he looks at it, he shall live, and Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard, and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived." (Num. 21:8-9)

God will raise the standard to show the way to those who are being brought back to Him from distant lands. It is a glistening sign of refuge that is available for all who look to Him as their Redeemer. God especially calls His children to raise the banner and prepare the way so that others can find Him in times when He is bringing His judgment upon a people. In Him there is perfect safety and peace. "Thus says the Lord God, 'Behold, I will lift up My hands to the nations, and set up My standard to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters will be carried on their shoulders. And kings will be your guardians and their princesses your nurses. They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of your feet; and you will know that I am the Lord, those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.'" (Isa. 49:22-23)

3. As a place of protection in times of God's judgment: "Thou hast given a banner to those who fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. That Thy beloved may be delivered, save with Thy right hand, and answer us!" (Psalm 60:4) "Lift up a standard toward Zion! Seek refuge, do not stand still, for I am bringing evil from the north, and great destruction. A lion has gone up from his thicket, and a destroyer of nations has set out; ...How long must I see the standard and hear the sound of the trumpet? For My people are foolish they do not know Me." (Jer. 4:6,21) God is preparing cities of refuge for those places of safety in time of judgment. (Deut. 19:3,4; Ecclesiastes 10:15) Unger's Bible Dictionary states, "It was customary to give a defeated party a banner as a token of protection, and it was regarded as the surest pledge of fidelity. God's lifting or setting up an ensign imports a peculiar presence, protection, and aid in leading and directing the people in the execution of His righteous will, and giving them comfort and peace in His service."

4. As a symbol that God is entering into judgment against His enemies: “Declare and proclaim among the nations. Proclaim it and lift up the standard. Do not conceal it but say, ‘Babylon has been captured, Bel has been put to shame, Marduk has been shattered; Her images have been put to shame, her idols have been shattered.’” (Jer. 50:2) “Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers! The Lord has aroused the spirit of the kings of Medes, because His purpose is against Babylon to destroy it; for it is the vengeance of the Lord, vengeance for His temple. Lift up a signal against the walls of Babylon; post a strong guard, station sentries, place men in ambush! For the Lord has both purposed and performed what He spoke concerning the inhabitants of Babylon...Lift up a signal in the land, blow a trumpet among the nations! Consecrate the nations against her...” (Jer. 51:12-13,27)

This is God’s description of the army He brings against those whom He is opposing in judgment. This army rallies to the Jehovah Nissi, the Banner of Victory: “He will also lift up a standard to the distant nation, and will whistle for it from the ends of the earth; and behold, it will come with speed swiftly. No one in it is weary or stumbles, none slumbers or sleeps; nor is the belt at its waist undone, nor its sandal strap broken. Its arrows are sharp, and all its bows are bent; the hoofs of its horses seem like flint, and its chariot wheels like a whirlwind. Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions; it grows as it seizes the prey, and carries it off with no one to deliver it. And it shall growl over it in that day like a roaring sea. If one looks to the land, behold, there is darkness and distress; even the light is darkened by its clouds.” (Isaiah 5:26-30)

Pray for the LORD to raise His banner over this nation, to gather His people to Himself and to fight for us!!

JEHOVAH NISSI!!  
Celebrate His victory!!  
“May He grant you your heart’s desire,  
and fulfill all your counsel!  
We sing for joy over your victory,  
and in the name of our God we will set up our banners.  
May the Lord fulfill all your petitions!! (Psalm 20:4-5)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Ex 17:15; Num 21:8; Num 21:9; Num 26:10; Ps 60:4; Isa 5:26; Isa 11:10; Isa 11:12; Isa 13:2; Isa 18:3; Isa 30:17; Isa 31:9; Isa 33:23; Isa 49:22; Isa 62:10; Jer 4:6; Jer 4:21; Jer 50:2; Jer 51:12; Jer 51:27; Ezek 27:7