

Aug 31st 2008: Names of God: Jehovah-Nissi The Lord my Banner: Exodus 17

Less than 2 weeks ago....you like me....were enthralled...way our athletes performed
Every time our flag flew high.....**And often** you...would noticed.... competitors...
Look to their flag....for inspiration...extra enablement...encouragement

When the children of Israel followed Moses...out of Egypt and into.....they had no flag
In fact....they had something far better...**The Rod of Elohim**Of God...in the hand of

The Rod.....caused havoc in Egypt.....at one point had turned into a snake
The rod.....that had struck the red sea and caused it to part
The rod.....that had recently brought forth water from a rock

Part of me wanted to bring a rod alongTo hold it above my head.....
But two things stopped me: I didn't know what it looked like
Second.....rod itself wasn't important.....**BUT Who the rod symbolised**

The Rod of God was their Banner.....Reminding them that Elohim was their King
He was in charge.....And He was the One they looked to.....For Deliverance...Power

You see the Hebrew word translated banner.....**Nissi**
Does not necessarily refer to a piece of cloth.....like a flag
More often it meant a pole....with a brass emblem or ensign on the end

It was a standard belonging to a king....ruler
Taken into battle as a sign that the king was in the midst
It was in his power and strength.....that the battle was fought

So the banner that the children of Israel had.....the rod.....was nothing much
Yet what it represented.....was Almighty God in their midst

- **And so it was that with God in their midst**
They had covered many miles.....Overcome many obstacles including ...food...water
But now they were visited with yet another great test
The test of battle

Exodus 17:8 says:

The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim.

Now these Amalekites were descendents from Esau and vowed enemies
They had been the first enemies to attack.....in the wilderness

Throughout the OT they are pictured as the forces of evil.....
constantly trying to absolutely eliminate.....Even...Esther....Haman Amalekite.

For the first time.....the Israelites do battle.....v9 says:

Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites.
Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands."

Moses stands on top of the hill.....and lifts up the Rod.....

He lifts up the Banner.....**That proclaims**.....we are depending upon God for victory
And as long as Moses kept the Rod...high.....They kept on winning....BUT.....

And it soon became apparent....that Moses could not hold up.....without help
So the people of God joined with Moses.....in lifting up the Rod.....and Joshua overcome

- **And after the battle had been won**....Moses built an altar....in thanksgiving
And He called it.....Jehovah-Nissi.....The Lord is my banner
For he knewthat it wasn't the Rod.....It wasn't even those holding up.....
It was Yaweh Himself.....THE Banner there for His people....When they.....

- **And this is just as true for us**.....The evil one is still the enemy of the Redeemed
Jehovah-Nissi still stands.....He promises us the victory....when we come to Him
As our Banner

We need as a church.....As believers.....to gather together under Jehovah-Nissi
We need to trust Him.....as we battle ... For our battles too...are many

Battles against addictions.....be they drugs....alcohol....pornography....gambling
Battles against sickness.....Against bitterness....loneliness.....disappointment

Battles against depression.....hopelessness.....dissentment....injustice....financial hardship
Sexual impurity.....**add to the list**

The evil one attacks on many fronts.....and before we know it we are in a battle
And at times its hard to see the victory at the end

Are you involved in a battle.....Then remember Jehovah-Nissi
Call upon Him.....Commit yourself to spending time with Him about it in prayer
Make seeking His presence all the time....your number one priority

Like Israel you are in a deadly serious position.....and your strength is not enough
You need to do your part.....But God's power is only available to you in this
When you commit yourself to seeking it as Moses did

It wasn't easy for Him to hold up the Rod of God.....He needed help to persevere
And it won't be easy for you either.....**You will need** others to stand with you
To hold up your hands when you get tired

The encouraging thing is that God has already shown....the power He has over..
He won the greatest victory on the cross.....and as you draw Him alongside you
.in your struggle.....**He guarantees** that he or she who endures.....will be saved

Some time after this battle.....the Israelites sinned against God in at terrible way
And as a judgment God sent snakes into their midst
But God also caused Moses to raise a pole in the centre....with the image of a.....

That word for pole.....is the same word used here for banner
And when we turn to the NT we read in John 3:14-15
Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that
everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

And as I read that.....I thought.....**that even as the Rod of**.....was the symbol of
Lord our Banner.....The Lord who gives the Victory.....
The Lord who empowers so that we might overcome

So the empty Cross is the Symbol for us.....of a God who fights for us against the evil

That attacks from within....or without

Last Thursday I sat and listened.....to the testimony of Fay and John

And as John talked about the amazing battles against evil....
that He had seen God victorious in.....Within his own life...and in the lives of many
I kept finding my eyes....move to the cross.....
To the symbol of the One.....who in His death....became... Jehovah-Nissi

This morning you may be aware....of being in a battle.....
and you know you need ...

I would like to invite you....to come to the front.....as a sign to Him
That you are looking to Him.....as the Israelites did...for the victory

I'm sure that you have already prayed much.....
but this is to do so....amongst God's

And I will pray for you as a group.....and then you can return
Unless you wish....and then you can stay

**There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day,
Up from the grave He rose again.
And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost it's grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine,
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.**