



Lesson 11 - *Yahweh Nissi* – The Lord is My Banner

Exodus 17:8-16

♥ Heart Talk

When you meet with your small group, share something about your continued experience of **being silent for 5 minutes before God** OR share something that you have learned about God from his names that we have studied that has really made a difference in your life, either in helping you persevere a difficulty or helping you experience God's presence in a more consistent or powerful way.

Introduction

The name *Yahweh Nissi* – *The Lord is my Banner* is found only once in the Bible, but the truth it expresses is found all through Scripture. *Nissi*, translated *banner*, can also be translated *standard* or *ensign*. In ancient times, a banner was a standard carried at the head of a military unit, often made out of wood or metal and shaped into various figures or emblems that could be attached to a staff or long pole. A banner, symbolizing the ideals of those who marched under it, indicated a rallying point for troops before and during a battle.

Banners were also symbols of safety and protection. Those who belonged to an army stood under their banner for security. A banner, which often included a bright, shiny ornament, was something that could be seen from afar as it glittered in the sun – encouraging the morale of those who fought under it. When the battle was over, a banner would also serve as a symbol of success and victory, becoming a sign of deliverance and salvation. Marching under a banner aroused devotion to a nation, a cause or a leader.

♥ Heart Preparation

Jesus' Encouraging Words to You . . .

Instead of yearning for a problem-free life, rejoice that trouble can highlight your awareness of My Presence. In the darkness of adversity, you are able to see more clearly the radiance of My Face. Accept the value of problems in this life, considering them pure joy. Remember that you have an eternity of trouble-free living awaiting you in heaven.

Jesus Calling (December 10) by Sarah Young

*In repentance and **rest** is your salvation, in **quietness** and trust is your strength . . . (Isaiah 30:15).* Continue to practice the discipline of **sitting quietly before God, in silence, for 5 minutes**. If your mind wanders during this time, gently bring it back to focus on God, saying something like, *Here I am, Lord or I belong to you, God*. Make space to sense God's Presence by **doing this exercise of silence 2 or 3 times this week**.

Remember, the purpose of silence is listening to God and being aware of his Presence. In silence, we close off the inner self from sounds – whether noise, music, or words – so that we may better still the chatter and clatter of our noisy hearts and be increasingly attentive to God. In silence, we are always listening to what God's Spirit may be saying to us in our hearts and minds.

A Prayer to Help Prepare Your Heart

*Speak, O Lord, as I come to You
To receive the food of your Holy Word
Take Your Truth, plant it deep in me
Shape and fashion me in Your likeness
That the light of Christ might be seen today,
In my acts of love and my deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in me
All your purposes, for Your glory.*

By Stuart Townend and Keith Getty

Questions

Read **Exodus 17:8-16**. You may want to find **Rephidim** on the map that was supplied in Lesson 10.

The people of Israel, led by Moses, faced many challenges on their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. They had been chased by the Egyptian army, trapped at the Red Sea, and had experienced hunger and thirst in the wilderness. At the time of this incident described in **Exodus 17:8-16**, only a few weeks had passed since they left Marah where God has turned bitter waters, sweet (**Lesson 10**). From Marah, the Israelites had gone to Elim, a place of refreshing and rest (**Exodus 15:27**), but they soon forgot all that God had done for them. In the Wilderness of Sin (**Exodus 16**) they again complained because there was no food – and God miraculously provided daily *manna* for them to eat. Now at Rephidim, (**Exodus 17:1**) they once more quarreled with Moses because there is no water and were almost ready to commit mutiny (**Exodus 17:4**), questioning whether *Yahweh* was even with them (**Exodus 17:7**). After God, again, amazingly provided water for them (**Exodus 17:5-6**), the people soon discovered that perhaps there were worse enemies in the wilderness besides hunger and thirst.

1. What was Moses' strategy against the attacking Amalekites and what were the different responsibilities he assigned (**17:8-11**)?

- ♥ What are some of the different types of "enemies" we all face in life? What is usually your first reaction when an "enemy" comes against you? What are some strategies you have used?
 - ♥ Consider what we have learned about the Israelites so far in these lessons. What disadvantages did they face in this battle with the Amalekites? Advantages? In your own battles of life, what do you see as your disadvantages? Advantages? Which seems to outweigh the other? How so?
2. Summarize what the *staff of God* (**17:9**) represented to the Israelites (**Exodus 4:17; 7:10, 17; 8:5, 16; 14:16; 17:5-6**). What role did it play in this battle (**17:11**)?

- ♥ Can you think of any physical items that you own which are important to you because of their spiritual significance? What purpose do these items serve? How might they encourage you?
 - ♥ Moses assigned he and Joshua very different roles in this battle (**17:9-11**). Why were both needed? What does this teach you about the battles you fight with your "enemies?"
3. What do you think is the significance of Moses' raised hands in this story and what effect did the raised staff have on the troops?

- ♥ What "battles" or challenges are you in right now that you might be trying to fight in your own strength? What do you need most to help you continue to endure? How can you get this help?
- ♥ Aaron and Hur helped Moses when he grew weary of holding up his hands (**17:12-13**). Has God ever sent others to help you in the midst of battle? Who and how? What difference did they make?
- ♥ What help could you give someone you know who is in the midst of a battle right now? How could you "shoulder" some responsibility to help the leader(s) of your faith community or Bible study?

4. After the battle, Moses built an altar, calling it *Yahweh Nissi* – **The Lord is My Banner**. Read again the introduction to this lesson. In what ways was *Yahweh* a *Banner* to the Israelites during this battle and in what ways did he win the victory for them?

- ♥ After the battle was won, what did God tell Moses to do (17:14)? What do you think was God's purpose? What application can you make to your own spiritual journey?

Why was God going to be at war against the Amalekites and blot out every trace of Amalek from under heaven (17:14, 16)? The Amalekites were distant cousins of the Israelites, descending from one of Esau's grandsons, Amalek. (Esau was Jacob's twin brother, so the Amalekites were direct descendants of Isaac.) They were a numerous and powerful people, living in the northern parts of the Sinai peninsula. As descendants of Isaac, it is likely that they knew about God's promise to give Canaan to Jacob and his descendants. As the Israelites passed through their land, the Amalekites should have offered help, not opposition, for the Israelites posed no threat to their people or land. They drew God's anger on two counts: 1) they tried to thwart the hand and plan of God in Israel's life and destiny; and 2) the first targets of their warfare were the sick, aged, and tired of Israel who lagged behind the main group (**Deuteronomy 25:17-19**). In short, the Amalekites "knew better" and God held them accountable. Attacking the Israelites was the same as attacking God's plan of redemption for all people and nations.

- ♥ What banner do you or raise up or depend on in life? How have you been tempted to depend on the banner of *self* or *money* or *position* or *control* instead of *Yahweh*? How can *Yahweh* be your *Banner*?
- ♥ In what ways has God protected you in your battles, assuring you that he is fighting for you? What battle has God recently won for you? What would you name your altar? The Lord is my _____.
5. The Israelites' experience of battle is an analogy of the *spiritual* warfare in which we find ourselves. Every follower of Jesus Christ is at war, whether they are aware of it or not. From the following verses, what do you learn about the "war" in which we find ourselves?

Ephesians 6:10-12 ; 1 Peter 5:8

Galatians 5:16-17; Romans 7:18-20

1 John 5:19; 1 John 2:15-16 -

- ♥ What do the words *schemes*, *strategies* and *tricks* reveal about the devil? What is his goal? What does the devil use to "devour" someone? What makes our battle a *spiritual* battle? What evidence do you see of the battle in your life? Your church? Your community? Your nation? The world?
- ♥ When do you usually become aware of the conflict within you, between the Spirit and your sinful nature? What does it feel like? What do you usually do about it?
- ♥ How does the enemy entice us with the values and things of the world? In what areas of your life does love for the things of the world compete with your love for God? How can this competition make you feel like you are at war?

6. From **Ephesians 6:13-18**, what are the weapons God supplies in order for us to fight a *spiritual* battle?

6:13	6:14	6:15
6:16	6:17	6:18

- ♥ How can things like **Truth, Christ's Righteousness, Salvation, Faith** and **God's Word**, etc. be used as weapons against the devil, our sinful nature and the temptations of the world?
- ♥ How do you "*put on*" the armor of God? Which of these are offensive weapons? Defensive weapons? When have these weapons helped you? How can you use them for someone else?

Yahweh Nissi – Jesus is My Banner

7. Even though the Israelites had to fight the battle with their enemy, the Amalekites, they were not alone in battle. Moses sat on top of a hill, where all could look up and see, holding up his hands in prayer and the staff of God as a banner (*Yahweh Nissi*) representing God's *presence, protection* and *victory*. As Christ followers, we too, have a **Banner** we can look to in our battles that assures us of God's presence, protection and especially his victory. Read and then think carefully about the following verses. What *similarities* to you see between Moses sitting on top of a hill with the raised staff of God and Jesus' *crucifixion, resurrection and ascension*? How is Jesus our **Banner**?

John 3:14; 12:32; Hebrews 2:14; Ephesians 1:19-21; Hebrews 12:2-3; 1 Peter 3:22

- ♥ When in battle, why is it important that we keep our eyes on Jesus? How do we do that?
 - ♥ How does Jesus being seated at God's right hand in the heavens, assure us the victory?
 - ♥ Banners are signs of *presence, protection* and *victory*. What banner does Jesus fly over *us* (**Song of Songs 2:4**)? How does this banner assure us of Jesus' *presence, protection, and victory* (**Romans 8:35-39**)?
8. For victory, the Israelites needed both **Joshua** on the field and **Moses** on the hilltop. How is Jesus *both Joshua and Moses* to us when we are in battle (**John 16:33; 1 John 4:4; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25**)?

♥ Heart Therapy

In this lesson we have learned that *Yahweh* is our *Banner*, always with us in battle, assuring us of the victory. We also saw the importance of encouraging, helping and praying for those who are presently in battle, just as Moses prayed for and encouraged Joshua, and as Aaron and Hur supported Moses.

Who do you know who is in the "thick of battle" right now? How can you pray for, help and encourage them? **Psalm 20** is a beautiful prayer written for those who are in battle. Read this Psalm and pray it for someone you know who is struggling in battle. Prayer will raise the banner of *Yahweh Nissi* over them. You might want to paraphrase all or parts of this Psalm, expressing its truth in your own words with contemporary language – and then **send it** to the one you are praying for. Your prayers and encouragement will assure them that *Yahweh Nissi* is truly with them in battle, assuring the victory!

Included with this lesson is a written warfare prayer that you can pray for yourself or the ones you love.

A Daily Prayer

My dear Lord Jesus I come to you now to be restored in you, to be renewed in you, to receive your love and your life, and all the grace and mercy I so desperately need this day. I honor you as my Sovereign, and I surrender every aspect of my life totally and completely to you. I give you my spirit, soul and body, my heart, mind, and will. I cover myself with your blood—my spirit, soul, and body, my heart, mind and will. I ask your Holy Spirit to restore me in you, renew me in you, and to lead me in this time of prayer. In all that I now pray, I stand in total agreement with your Spirit, and with my intercessors and allies, by your Spirit alone.

In all that I now pray, I include (*my spouse and/or children and others you are praying for, by name*). Acting as their spiritual ally, I bring them under your authority and covering, as I come under your authority and covering. I cover (*spouse and/or children and others I am praying for, by name*) with your blood – their spirit, soul and body, their heart, mind and will. I ask your Spirit to restore them in you, renew them in you, and apply to them all that I now pray on their behalf, acting as their ally.

Dear God, holy and victorious Trinity, you alone are worthy of all my worship, my heart's devotion, all my praise, all my trust and all the glory of my life. I love you, I worship you, I trust you. I give myself over to you in my heart's search for life. You alone are Life, and you have become my life. I renounce all other gods, all idols, and I give you the place in my heart and in my life that you truly deserve. I confess here and now that this is all about you, God, and not about me. You are the Hero of this story, and I belong to you. Forgive me for my every sin. Search me and know me and reveal to me where you are working in my life, and grant to me the grace of your healing and deliverance, and a deep and true repentance.

Heavenly Father, thank you for loving me and choosing me before you made the world. You are my true Father—my Creator, my Redeemer, my Sustainer, and the true end of all things, including my life. I love you, I trust you, I worship you. I give myself over to you to be one with you in all

things, as Jesus is one with you. Thank you for proving your love by sending Jesus. I receive him and all his life and all his work, which you ordained for me. Thank you for including me in Christ, for forgiving me my sins, for granting me his righteousness, for making me complete in him. Thank you for making me alive with Christ, raising me with him, seating me with him at your right hand, establishing me in his authority, and anointing me with your Holy Spirit, your love and your favor. I receive it all with thanks and give it total claim to my life—my spirit, soul, and body, my heart, mind and will. I bring the life and the work of Jesus over (wife and/or children, by name) and over my home, my household, my vehicles, finances, all my kingdom and domain.

Jesus, thank you for coming to ransom me with your own life. I love you, I worship you, I trust you. I give myself over to you, to be one with you in all things. And I receive all the work and all of the triumph of your cross, death, blood and sacrifice for me, through which I am atoned for, I am ransomed and transferred to your kingdom, my sin nature is removed, my heart is circumcised unto God, and every claim made against me is disarmed this day. I now take my place in your cross and death, through which I have died with you to sin, to my flesh, to the world, and to the evil one. I take up the cross and crucify my flesh with all its pride, arrogance, unbelief, and idolatry (and anything else you are currently struggling with). I put off the old man. I ask you to apply to me the fullness of your cross, death, blood and sacrifice. I receive it with thanks and give it total claim to my spirit, soul and body, my heart, mind and will.

Jesus, I also sincerely receive you as my life, my holiness and strength, and I receive all the work and triumph of your resurrection, through which you have conquered sin and death and judgment. Death has no mastery over you, nor does any foul thing. And I have been raised with you to a new life, to live your life – dead to sin and alive to God. I now take my place in your resurrection and in your life, through which I am saved by your life. I reign in life through your life. I receive your life – your humility, love and forgiveness, your integrity in all things, your wisdom, discernment

and cunning, your strength, your joy, your union with the Father. Apply to me the fullness of your resurrection. I receive it with thanks and give it total claim to my spirit, soul and body, my heart, mind and will.

Jesus, I also sincerely receive you as my authority, rule, and dominion, my everlasting victory against Satan and his kingdom, and my ability to bring your Kingdom at all times and in every way. I receive all the work and triumph of your ascension, through which you have judged Satan and cast him down, you have disarmed his kingdom. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to you, Jesus. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to you, and you are worthy to receive all glory and honor, power and dominion, now and forevermore. And I have been given fullness in you, in your authority. I now take my place in your ascension, and in your throne, through which I have been raised with you to the right hand of the Father and established in your authority. I now bring the kingdom of God, and the authority, rule and dominion of Jesus Christ over my life today, over my home, my household, my vehicles and finances, over all my kingdom and domain.

I now bring the authority, rule and dominion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fullness of the work of Christ, against Satan, against his kingdom, against every foul and unclean spirit come against me. (At this point you might want to name the spirits that you know have been attacking you). I bring the full work of Jesus Christ against every foul power and black art, against every human being and their warfare. I bind it all from me in the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and in his Name.

Holy Spirit, thank you for coming. I love you, I worship you, I trust you. I sincerely receive you and all the work and victory in Pentecost, through which you have come, you have clothed me with power from on high, sealed me in Christ. You have become my union with the Father and the Son, become the Spirit of truth in me, the life of God in me, my Counselor, Comforter, Strength, and Guide. I honor you as my Sovereign, and I yield every dimension of my spirit, soul and body, my heart, mind and will to you and you alone, to be filled with you, to walk in step with you in all

things. Fill me afresh. Restore my union with the Father and the Son. Lead me in all truth, anoint me for all of my life and walk and calling, and lead me deeper into Jesus today. I receive you with thanks, and I give you total claim to my life.

Heavenly Father, thank you for granting to me every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. I claim the riches in Christ Jesus over my life today, my home, my kingdom and domain. I bring the blood of Christ over my spirit, soul, and body, my heart, mind and will. I put on the full armor of God – the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel, helmet of salvation. I take up the shield of faith and sword of the Spirit, and I choose to wield these weapons at all times in the power of God. I choose to pray at all times in the Spirit.

Thank you for your angels. I summon them in the authority of Jesus Christ and command them to destroy the kingdom of darkness throughout my kingdom and domain, destroy all that is raised against me, and to establish your Kingdom throughout my kingdom and domain. I ask you to send forth your Spirit to raise up prayer and intercession for me this day. I now call forth the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ throughout my home, my family, my kingdom and my domain, in the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, with all glory and honor and thanks to him.