

## **Names of God from the Bible**

### **4 – Jehovah Nissi**

*Every name of God is an eternal Name. Jehovah Nissi – The Lord my Banner.*

#### **Reading: Genesis 17:8-16**

Banner, standard or ensign. Each of these pictures is used in Scripture for various reasons. There were the standards used by each of the four divisions of the three tribes settled in each side of the camp of Israel. Judah on the east; Ephraim on the west; Rueben on the south and Dan to the north, surrounding the Tent of Meeting. Additionally, each tribal family was to have its own banner.

There are other references, which imply the banners were used as flags or signals, providing a means of communication throughout the camp. At other times a banner was a rallying point. Indeed, if it was situated on a hilltop and unattended, it was a mark of defeat. It seems that banners were primarily used as a sign of allegiance.

The Israelites were in the desert making their way to the Promised Land. They had just been rescued from Egypt and crossed the Red Sea on dry land. They had grumbled to God over the lack of water, food and meat, and so God responded by providing water, the Manna and quails.

Hard on the heels of these challenges, we find that the Israelites were attacked by the Amalekites at Rephidim. Interestingly, Moses didn't summon all the people to fight but rather asked Joshua, his commander-in-chief, to choose some men and to go out and fight the enemy. Joshua duly organised his troops and engaged the enemy in battle.

Moses, however, was not an uninvolved or unconcerned partner in this battle. He was very well aware that this battle required God's omnipotent help. Indeed, without God's help, these unbattle-hardened and recently-released slaves were going to be annihilated. Furthermore, Moses decided that one-off prayer was inappropriate. No, Moses was going to have to intercede during the length of the fight, however long it would take.

So important was this battle and the need for prayer that Moses took his two lieutenants, Aaron and Hur, with him. Aaron was, of course, Moses' elder brother and Hur might have been Miriam's son (or husband, depending upon which 'tradition' you accept). I wonder if Jesus thought of this occasion when He told His disciples that whenever two or three were gathered together, he would be right there with them.

The battle raged, and as long as Moses lifted his hands in prayer, Joshua and his troops were successful. However, whenever Moses' hands drooped, the enemy prevailed. Realising this and noticing Moses getting tired, Aaron and Hur found a rock and placed it so Moses could sit on it whilst they each raised one of Moses' hands. The day drew to a close, and Joshua and his troops finally routed the Amalekites.

God told Moses to record this event on a scroll as a memorial and to ensure that Joshua read it because God had promised He would completely annihilate the Amalekites in due course. It looks to me as if God was suggesting, even here, that Joshua would later succeed Moses as the leader of the Israelites.

Evidently, Moses not only wrote the details on a scroll as requested by God, but he additionally built an altar and called it "Jehovah Nissi – The Lord is My Banner". Yes, Moses may have been on

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the hill with Aaron and Hur but the major player was God. God was fighting for Israel and He had put His banner on the hill for all to see. Unfortunately, Israel did have to keep fighting the Amalekites, who were finally King Saul's downfall.

However, with God as their Banner, Israel will never be exterminated.

### **What does that name mean for us today**

First of all, God is still on the side of Israel and, consequently, the enemies of Israel are God's enemies and so are bound to ultimately fail. Secondly, if we put our faith and trust in God, as Paul says, nothing *"will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

### **Prayer**

*Father, I thank You for being Israel's banner. I pray for the peace of Israel and the peace of Jerusalem. Please continue to guard them from all their enemies. Thank You for being my banner too. Thank You that nothing can separate me from Your love. Amen.*

### **Additional Readings**

- Psalm 60
- Song of Solomon 2:3-13
- Isaiah 42:8-23
- Romans 8:31-39

### **Questions**

1. What is the banner God puts over us?
2. Has God revealed Himself in this way to you? How and when?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that name?