

**"Jehovah Nissi"**

**Exodus 17**

**INTRODUCTION:** Tonight, in our study of the names of God we are going to look at the name, "JEHOVAH NISSI". This name means, "The Lord is my Banner". We will come to understand how this applies to us as we study the text before us tonight. Now last week I had explained to you that as we study the different names of God we **MUST** look at the context of the passage in order to understand the true meaning and then we can accurately make the application to our own lives.

**I. The Background**

**Notice Exodus 17:8a**

Before we look at the events which will follow in these verses we must closely examine the word, "THEN". This word points back to the events which happened and were recorded in chapter 16 and the first 7 verses of chapter 17.

Let me first of all give you the setting. Israel crossed through the Red Sea in Exodus 14 after they were set free from the slavery of Egypt. Then in the beginning of Exodus 15 Moses recorded the song of victory which they sang in great joy as God had drowned Pharaoh and his army.

This is a picture of the believer's salvation. The freedom from Egypt is a picture of our freedom from the slavery of sin. When we were first saved we had a great joy within our hearts and we sang out praising God for His deliverance.

**Notice Exodus 15:22-25**

The waters at Marah were bitter until the tree was cast in. This is a picture of how the waters of this world become bitter to us after we are saved. Things are different and there is no longer any pleasure in the things which at one time brought pleasure into our lives. The tree represents the cross. So, the picture here for us is that Jesus Christ must be in all we do in this life otherwise there will be no satisfaction. All this world has to offer is bitter to the believer if Jesus Christ is not in the midst of what we do.

**Notice Exodus 15:26-27**

They then came to Elim where they experienced much needed rest. Is this not how the Christian life begins? We discover new things and then we rest in what we have found and then the journey goes on.

**Notice Exodus 16:1-4**

Here we see that Israel was tested with no food. They began to complain, and God gave them manna. The manna was a picture of Jesus Christ. They would feed upon the manna daily for the next 40 years. This is a picture of how we are to feed upon Jesus Christ as we journey through this life. He is the Bread of Life and therefore to keep up our spiritual strength we must feed upon Him.

**Notice Exodus 17:1-7**

Here was the next test that Israel would face. They had no water. This water is a picture of our fellowship with our Lord. Just like this water our fellowship is sweet and satisfying as we pass through this old world that is dry and barren.

So, let me pull the picture together for you. We are saved by the blood of the Lamb and it is then that we are set free from the slavery and bondage of sin. Shortly after salvation we discover that the world is not what we once thought it was. What we used to enjoy in life now seems to be bitter and it has no fulfillment. Then we learn that whatever we do Jesus must be in the midst of our activities or there will be bitterness and emptiness. We then find rest in the midst of our discoveries. We then begin our Christian journey and we realize the more we feed upon Jesus Christ/the Word the stronger we become spiritually. This then leads us into sweet fellowship with our Lord. We also learn that there are many distractions in this life that can keep us from feeding upon the Word and enjoying the sweet waters of fellowship with our Lord, so it requires self-discipline.

Then we learn there is an enemy.

**II. The Battle**

**Notice Exodus 17:8**

Here we see that Israel was attacked by Amalek. Now we have looked at Amalek before, but I want to refresh your mind on who these people were. They were descendants of Esau.

**Genesis 36:12**

<sup>12</sup> And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.

Esau is a picture of the flesh/sin nature in the believer and so is Amalek. Here in our text this is the very first battle which Israel faced after they were set free. The flesh is the very first battle which the believer faces after we are saved. We are given a new nature. We are given a new heart, but the old nature still lives. So, we as believers are engaged in a battle each and every day with the flesh and that is the very picture here. Let me show you a few more details about the attack which Moses points to here.

**Deuteronomy 25:17-18**

*<sup>17</sup> Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;*

*<sup>18</sup> How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.*

Amalek attacked from behind and he attacked those who were feeble, faint and weary. These were those who were the greatest distance from their leader Moses.

**Application:**

This is a picture of those who are most likely to fall to the desires of the flesh. Those who are furthest from our Leader, Jesus Christ. These are those who have become entangled in the affairs of this life and slowly they have drifted away. Because they are at a distance from the Lord they become feeble, faint and weary, spiritually speaking. These are those who have grown cold. Let me show you an example of how this happens.

**Mark 14:53-54**

*<sup>53</sup> And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.*

*<sup>54</sup> And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.*

**Mark 14:66-71**

*<sup>66</sup> And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:*

*<sup>67</sup> And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.*

*<sup>68</sup> But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.*

*<sup>69</sup> And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.*

*<sup>70</sup> And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.*

*<sup>71</sup> But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.*

**Notice Exodus 17:9-13**

Moses had determined that the next day Israel would enter into battle with Amalek. Moses would go to the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand and he would hold the rod above his head. While Moses' held his hands up Israel prevailed in the battle but when his hands came down Amalek prevailed. His arms grew weary and so Aaron and Hur stood on either side of Moses and they supported his arms and so Joshua discomfited Amalek with the sword. Joshua did not completely destroy the Amalekites but in the power of God he turned them away.

There is within this scene a beautiful picture that many miss. Moses, Aaron and Hur standing on top of the hill are a picture of the cross.

**John 19:18**

***18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.***

When Jesus was crucified there was a man on either side of him that was also crucified. That is the picture as Moses holds out his arms with Aaron and Hur on either side. We see in this the cross.

**Application:**

This is exactly what we have been studying on Wednesday nights in Romans. Amalek represents the flesh and the one way the flesh can be defeated is by the cross.

**Romans 6:6-11**

***6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.***

*7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.*

*8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*

*9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*

*10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

***11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

Victory over the lusts of the flesh are only reached by RECKONING our flesh to be crucified on the cross with Christ. We must believe that our sin nature was rendered

powerless by the cross and therefore we no longer are under his power. There is a new power within us and it is the power of the Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead.

Just like Amalek was not destroyed so neither is our flesh/sin nature. This is a battle which the believer encounters every day that we live. There will be a day when this battle will be over but not until we die, or the rapture happens.

### III. The Memorial

#### Notice Exodus 17:14-16

Here in verse 15 is the name which Moses gave to God. Jehovah Nissi, the Lord is our banner. To put this in words that we can better understand it could be translated, "THE LORD IS OUR STENGTH". He is the One who will fight our battles. When we find ourselves faced with the temptations of the lusts of the flesh and we rely upon the truth that our sin nature was crucified with Christ then it is the power of God we see at work within our lives. He is our strength to overcome temptations.

Notice the words of an unnamed teacher:

*"Nothing is more abundantly proved in the Bible than that the Lord will fight for us if we will let Him. All He asks of us is to be still and let Him fight for us. This is the only sort of spiritual conflict that is ever successful. But we are very slow to learn this. When temptations come, instead of handing the battle over to the Lord we summon all our forces to fight them ourselves. We believe, perhaps, that the Lord is somewhere near, and if the worst comes to worst, He will step in to help us. But for the most part we feel that we ourselves and we only must do all the fighting. Our method of fighting consists generally in a series of repentings, resolutions and promises, weary struggles for victory, and then failing again—over and over. Each time we tell ourselves that now at last we will have the victory, and each time we fail even worse than before. This may go on for weeks, months, or even years, and no real or permanent deliverance ever comes. God has told us to cease from our own efforts and hand our battles over to Him."*

Let me show you Israel's second encounter with the Amalekites as they relied upon their own strength.

#### Numbers 14:40-45

<sup>40</sup> *And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned.*

<sup>41</sup> *And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper.*

<sup>42</sup> *Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.*

<sup>43</sup> *For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you.*

<sup>44</sup> *But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.*

<sup>45</sup> *Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.*

**Conclusion:**

I will close with an illustration to challenge us all in our walk.

**Illustration** - Queen Elizabeth II of England has three royal residences (Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyrood) plus two private homes. This could be confusing for those who want to find her except for one important fact: the queen's banner always flies over whichever residence she is currently occupying. If her banner of blue and gold is on the flagpole, the queen is sure to be present. In the same way Moses built an altar and named it Jehovah Nissi so that all would know that the King was in residence. Perhaps you are going through difficult circumstances. Or perhaps you have just come out of a time of trial. Regardless of the circumstances, we need to ask ourselves whether we are "flying the banner" of the LORD so that others know the King is present. Moses built a memorial to remind everyone that God was in residence with His people Israel and that He had not abandoned in the midst of the attacks of the Amalekites. Generation after generation could look up and see this altar, Jehovah Nissi, and recall that even as the Lord was present with Israel in the battle against the Amalekites, He was still present in their midst. In the same way, believers today should raise the Lord's banner, no matter how difficult their circumstances, knowing that He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow and He will not abandon His presence in their midst, even though circumstances might suggest otherwise. Paul testified to this truth writing to Timothy explaining that...

**2 Timothy 4:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.*

*<sup>17</sup> Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*

*Is your testimony like that of Moses and Paul? Is it obvious to others that Jesus is in residence in your life? Make sure that His flag, colored with faith, hope and love, flies high over the castle of your life. It's a privilege to fly that banner but it is a shame not to. If the King is in residence, be sure to fly His flag.*