

Yahweh Nissi: "The Lord Is My Banner"

Scripture Reading — Exodus 17:8-16

*Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner.
—Exodus 17:15 —*

The Israelites' victory over the Amalekites has long captured the imaginations of children. While Moses held up his arms, the Israelites were winning, but when Moses's arms drooped, the Amalekites overpowered Israel. Finally, with Aaron and Hur supporting Moses' arms, the Israelites triumphed over the Amalekites.

Many adults find this story puzzling, even troubling. After Amalek is defeated, God tells Moses to record the event, because, he says, "I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven." No easy answers come to mind to explain this sober ending.

After the battle, Moses builds an altar, calling it Yahweh Nissi, "The LORD is my Banner." The Hebrew word nissi comes from nis, meaning "banner." Ancient armies often attached a banner or a flag to a pole as a focal point and a rallying sign for their troops engaged in battle. For Moses and the Israelites, their first battle on the way to the promised land showed that God was their banner. He called his people to rally to him. The Lord went before his people, protecting them and triumphing over their enemies.

In the very real spiritual battles we fight every day, including the command to love our enemies, let's remember Yahweh Nissi, "the LORD is our banner." And his banner over us, through Jesus Christ, is love.

Prayer

O God, your banner over us is love. Help us to keep our focus on you in our daily spiritual battles. Help us to do this as instruments of your peace. In Jesus's name, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [God](#), [God's Names](#)

<https://today.reframemedia.com/devotions/yahweh-nissi-the-lord-is-my-banner-2014-05-16>

Printed on October 13, 2019

