



Sermon Notes from 18 August

The Banner for the Fight (*Exodus 17:8-16*)

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As a nation, from biblical to modern times, Israel had fought many wars. Their warring history officially began here with their victory over the Amalekites. God also revealed Himself as *Jehovah Nissi* (*The Lord is my Banner*). The Hebrew word for 'banner' means signal pole. This is where army troops would rally together. When it comes to learning the art of spiritual warfare as God's people, this must be our focus: our God is Jehovah Nissi.

3 spiritual lessons from Israel who comes to know God as Jehovah Nissi

1) We need to fight

v8 - Rephidim was the place of battle for the Israelites; where they would face an external threat for the first time after crossing the Red Sea: the Amalekites. They were enemies against Israel and God for generations and preyed on the weak (De 25:17-18).

v9 - Joshua is made mention for the first time. He was called upon by Moses to mobilize men to fight. Instead of eliminating the Amalekites much like He routed the Egyptians (Ex 14:14), God calls the Israelites to fight.

2 important truths from the fact that we need to fight

#1 We cannot put God in a box - God has divine reasons for using different approaches for our good and His glory.

#2 The purpose of our fight is sanctification in Christ - our fight is not physical, but spiritual. The God who fights for us when we are weakest and helpless is the same God that teaches and empowers us to fight.

Fight against the sins in your heart! Fight against the temptations of this world! Fight against the accusations and lies of the evil one! Fight because God is Jehovah Nissi!

2) We need one another for the fight

From the passage, there is little detailing on the physical aspect of the fight. All the attention was given to Moses, Aaron, and Hur (Moses' brother-in-law) up on a mountain. Moses was also fighting a battle that affected the physical outcome of the battle down below - holding the staff up with his hands (v11). Both Aaron and Hur supported Moses all throughout (v12) until they overcame the Amalekites (v13). Moses was leading from a position of visible trembling weakness with support from his brothers. When victory is secured for God's people, it must be clear who deserves the glory: God Himself. Unless you come to embrace the depth of your own weakness, you will never experience the depth of God's power (2 Co 12:19). We are called to strengthen one another. Admit your weaknesses and seek the steadying support of others! Avail yourself and lend support to those who need help!

3) We need the Lord for the fight

v14 - This is the first time God instructs for something to be written down (for it to be remembered). Moses also builds an altar for the first time to worship God (v16). Moses knew that the victory belonged to God. Whatever your battle is, don't give up! You have a big God; bigger than all your enemies, who has given you the assurance that He has not abandoned you in the fight. He is down here fighting for you (v16)!

Divine power has already come in perfection as Christ, God incarnate. He has ascended to heaven and is alive and above fighting for us. The Lord intercedes for you! The Lord on the cross is our banner; the banner is for everyone (Isa 49:22)! Rally under His banner and declare God as Jehovah Nissi!