

יְהוָה

“YHWH-Nissi: The Lord Is my Banner”

Introduction

Ex 17:8-16

8 Then came Am'alek and fought with Israel at Reph'idim.

9 And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out, fight with Am'alek; tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand."

10 So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Am'alek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

11 Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Am'alek prevailed.

12 But Moses' hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat upon it, and Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; so his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

13 And Joshua mowed down Am'alek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14 And the LORD said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Am'alek from under heaven."

15 And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD is my banner,

16 saying, "A hand upon the banner of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Am'alek from generation to generation." RSV

Rephidim means "place of rest." It was while they were at a place of rest that Amalek attacked them. As long as Moses lifted his hands toward heaven with the rod of God in his hand, the children of Israel prevailed. In memorial of this standing banner, Moses built the altar and named it YHWH-Nissi, the Lord is my banner.

To understand this banner, we need to look at the rod and its history.

I. The Rod of Moses

A. The Rod and the Serpent

1. Moses

Ex 4:1-5 NKJV

1 Then Moses answered and said, "But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.'"

2 So the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A rod."

3 And He said, "Cast it on the ground." So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it.

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail" (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand),

5 "that they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

Moses's rod turns from a rod to a serpent and back to a rod. The first thing we understand is that the rod and the serpent are tied together. The next thing we

realize is that the rod has mastery over the serpent. This truth is further verified by Aaron's rod.

2. Aaron

Ex 7:9-12

9 "When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Show a miracle for yourselves,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and let it become a serpent.'"

10 So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the LORD commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

11 But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

12 For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. NKJV

It is Aaron's rod that later the Lord causes to bud, bloom, and give fruit. It was the almond branch rod of Aaron the high priest that swallowed up the serpents!

3. The rod of God

Ex 4:20

Then Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand. NKJV

After the miracle, Moses refers to his staff as "the rod of God." It was as the rod of God that he stood on the mountain during the battle with Amalek.

Ex 17:9 NKJV

And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand."

B. The Rod and the Rock

Just prior to Amalek's attack, a major miracle is recorded.

1. Water from the rock

Ex 17:1-6

1 Water from the Rock (Num 20:1-13) Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink.

2 Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink." So Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?"

3 And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

- 4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!"
- 5 And the LORD said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go.
- 6 Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. NKJV

The Lord told him to strike the rock and water would flow, and he did and it did. But this was not the only miracle (nor necessarily the most dramatic) that Moses had performed with the rod.

2. Miracles with the rod

- Turned into a snake and back again - Ex 4:2-4
- The Plague of hail - Ex 9:23
- The Plague of locusts - Ex 10:13
- The dividing of the Red Sea - Ex 14:16

With all that went before, how does God describe the rod that Moses was to strike the rock with?

3. "Wherewith you struck the river"

Ex 17:5

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, **wherewith thou smotest the river**, take in thine hand, and go. KJV

C. The Rod and the River

1. Plague on the Nile

Ex 7:17-20

- 17 Thus says the LORD: "By this you shall know that I am the LORD. Behold, I will strike the waters which are in the river with the rod that is in my hand, and they shall be turned to blood.
- 18 And the fish that are in the river shall die, the river shall stink, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink the water of the river.""
- 19 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, "Take your rod and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their rivers, over their ponds, and over all their pools of water, that they may become blood. And there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in buckets of wood and pitchers of stone.""
- 20 And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. NKJV

2. Water and blood

John 19:34

But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. NKJV

3. The lifted banner

John 12:20-33

20 The Fruitful Grain of Wheat Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast.

21 Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

22 Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

23 But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

27 Jesus Predicts His Death on the Cross "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

28 Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."

29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered.

Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him."

30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.

31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

32 And I, **if I am lifted up from the earth**, will draw all peoples to Myself."

33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die. NKJV

Remember that this was said in response to Gentiles wanting to come and see Him.

II. The Banner of the Cross

A. As Moses Lifted Up

John 3:14-15

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. NKJV

Jesus told Nicodemus that the lifting of the serpent in the desert was a symbol of the crucifixion.

B. The Snake in the Desert

Num 21:4-9

4 The Bronze Serpent Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way.

5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread."

6 So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.

7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people.

8 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live."

9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. NKJV

The word for "pole" in verse 9 is the word from which we get "nissi." Those who looked to the snake on the pole were dead already unless they turned to it in faith. The cross was a judgment on the devil and those who turn to it are saved from his bite. Which begs the question, where does he bite?

C. The Serpent and the Flesh

1. He feeds on the flesh

i. That old serpent, the devil

Rev 12:9

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. NKJV

ii. Cursed to feed on dust

Gen 3:14 NKJV

So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

iii. Dust is the flesh

Gen 2:7

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. NKJV

Gen 3:19

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return." NKJV

2. Amalek, child of flesh

- i. Grandson of Esau
Gen 36:12

Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. NKJV

- ii. Born after the flesh
Gal 4:22, 29

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.

29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. NKJV

- iii. The Lord is at war continually
Ex 17:16

for he said, "Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." NKJV

Amalek represents the flesh. The devil attacks our flesh. Why was God's judgment on Amalek so severe?

Deut 25:17-19 NKJV

17 Destroy the Amalekites "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt,

18 how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.

19 Therefore it shall be, when the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

It is when we are tired, weary, and straggling and the fear of God subsides that the flesh gets the upper hand. We need to be continually vigilant and at war with our flesh.

Rom 8:5-11

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.
- 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
- 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. NKJV

Col 3:5-10

- 5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
- 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,
- 7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.
- 8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.
- 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,
- 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, NKJV

How is this accomplished? Because Jesus defeated the devil at the cross.

3. Destroying the works of the devil

1 John 3:8

He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. NKJV

III. The Armies of the Lord

A. Mahanaim

Gen 32:1-2

- 1 So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.
- 2 When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim. NKJV

The Lord later revealed to the children of Jacob how they should camp.

B. The Camp of the Lord

Num 2:2

"Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp some distance from the tabernacle of meeting. NKJV

1. Ox

The ox was Ephraim and shows us the Lord as servant.

Matt 20:27-28

27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave --

28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." NKJV

John 13:12-15 NKJV

12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?

13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

If we will serve one another as He served us, two purposes will be met. One, we will not fall into arrogance and pride. Two, the weak, weary, and stragglers will be ministered to.

2. Man

The man was Reuben and shows us Jesus as the son of man.

Heb 4:15-16

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NKJV

3. Eagle

The eagle is Dan. Eagles eat snakes and it shows the Lord's dominance over the serpent.

Luke 10:18-20

18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." NKJV

4. Lion

The lion is Judah. It shows us the Lord as King of Kings, triumphant.

Rev 5:5

Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." NIV

C. The Banner for all People

Isa 11:1-10

- 1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
- 2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD--
- 3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;
- 4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
- 5 Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
- 6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.
- 7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
- 8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.
- 9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.
- 10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. NIV

Conclusion

Song 2:3-4

- 3 Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my lover among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste.
- 4 He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love. NIV