

THE LORD IS MY BANNER

*“Moses built an altar and he called it The LORD is my Banner. He said, ‘For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD’.”
—EXODUS 17:15*

In the book of Exodus, God gave the Israelites victory after victory. He freed them from Egyptian bondage and parted the Red Sea for them. He provided clean water, which not only quenched their thirst, but purged them from diseases and parasites they’d carried with them out of Egypt. In a barren wilderness, He gave them food, and day and night, guided, sheltered and protected them. And then suddenly the Israelites run smack into an enemy, the Amalekites. They had never battled before.

Moses instructs Joshua to choose some of his men to fight, and he would stand on top of a hill, overlooking the battle with the staff of God raised in his hands. The moment Moses tired and the staff lowered, the Amalekites prevailed, but his brother, Aaron, and friend, Hur, helped to prop Moses’ arms up, keeping the staff of God raised in the air. Their first battle went on all day until sunset and ended with the Israelites receiving victory. Exodus 17:14 says, “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure Joshua hears it...’” Moses then built an altar and called it “The LORD is my Banner.”

The Old Testament stories are not simply historical records, but are written to teach us remarkable truths that apply in all circumstances in the Christian life. Victory over the enemies of God is never won by our own ingenuity and skills. It is received and appropriated by faith. Though Joshua and his men had fought hard in the valley, God wanted

them to know this was not about their ability and endurance, but about ‘The LORD is my banner’. This was God’s battle, His business, and the staff of God lifted up symbolized the fact that God was their fighter.

We can receive victory after victory and see God’s amazing works, but that can also be a dangerous time, because it is then we are often faced with an enemy that is going to oppose the work of God. In Egypt, the Israelites suffered greatly under slavery; they panicked when trapped between the Red Sea and an ensuing army, and there was blood, sweat and toil in the valley where they fought the Amalekites.

The Christian life doesn’t mean our way will be smooth and easy, but it means we have “Jehovah-nissi” – the LORD is my banner. And to have the Lord as our banner means that our troubling situations become His battle, His business. Ours is to do what Moses did – obey what God tells us, and trust Him for the victory.

PRAYER: I pray, Lord, that in whatever troubling situations I face, I will remember You are my banner, and take my strength and refuge in You.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I taking comfort in the fact the Lord is my banner, or am I trying to fight my own battles?