

CNL Season 2009

8.1 LORD NISSI -- OUR BANNER pt 1

Transcription

Tonight, if I can encourage you, go inside your bulletin and there is a continuation — last week we showed how Jehovah, our God, was Lord of Sabaoth. He was the Lord of the battle. And this week we continue with our study on the names of the Lord and how we can get to know the Lord better. Once again, don't forget that when you call somebody by specific names, it alters the way they see you and it alters, affects you as well as you talk with them.

So when we call upon the Lord this week, we're going to be saying Jehovah-Nissi or Lord who is Nissi. He is our banner. Can you all say Nissi? Nissi. Jehovah-Nissi. Let's say that. Jehovah-Nissi. He is the one who is our banner. Now, a lot of you have seen banners before. In fact, I think we have a couple of slides just to make sure as — if you all could shoot up there on the screen, I think we have a couple of graphics or photographs which we can take a look at. The flag, an American flag. Any flag is actually a form of a banner. If you can continue on. Star-Spangled Banner we've heard about. Here's another banner. It's hanging from a pole or a post. As you can see, it's got support from the top and the bottom. If you'd continue on.

Now this is a banner. This is when a banner was raised high and it showed victory. We're going to look at banners and what their purposes are tonight. But here, the very famous Iwa Jima, you'll see in war time where a banner is raised high. Perfect example, once again, of a banner declaring a statement. Could you continue on? Here are banners that you see hanging on the right side and you see banners all down the street. They declare something. They're making a point and as you notice they are raised and elevated high up where they can be seen. Are there any more shots there? These are banners once again. Any more? Great. Here's another banner. As you see, it's held up high on a post as it hangs. Thank you all very much.

And so banners are things we see every day. But not many banners are simply rolled up and left down on the sidewalk. That's not a very effective banner. As you notice, a banner is usually raised high. And so tonight Jehovah, our banner, we're going to find, is one who, when raised high, has a powerful, powerful effect as Nissi.

I want to just — you know, I praise the Lord you all are here tonight, even though it looked like it was pretty rainy, it was going to get kind of miserable outside. It's always a blessing when I see you all here and it is a joy for me. Years ago a pastor put together a list and I kind of chuckled. He put together a list of reasons that he has stopped going to sporting events. Of course, being a pastor, he was kind of tongue in cheek talking about church, but he did it with sporting events. He made it clear, and I thought you might get a kick out of this. I know that this wouldn't be any of you, but this is why he stopped going to sporting events.

He said, number one, it bugs me because every time I go they ask me for money. Number two, the people with whom I had to sit didn't seem friendly. Number three, the seats are too hard — not all that comfortable. Of course, he is relating to church, but he said sporting events. Number four, he said I went to many games, but the coach and the players never learned my name. Number five, the referee didn't always agree with me, so I left. Number six, I suspected I was sitting with some hypocrites. In fact, I think some of them came to see their friends and what others were wearing rather than to watch the game. Number seven, some games went into overtime and I couldn't get to lunch on time. I thought that was kind of funny. The band played some numbers I had never heard before. And he goes on and he finally gets down to the bottom where he says I was taken to too many games by my parents when I was growing up, so I don't go now.

So a lot of people have a lot of reasons not to go on Sunday or Saturday night. I praise the Lord that you all are here tonight, and I pray that you're affected -- as we study the name of God, I pray that you are affected and moved to be one who raises up the banner, the banner of our Lord on high.

So as you saw up there, there were poles which hung the banners. Tonight I just want you to just kind of make a correlation. First of all, the banner is the name of God. He is our Lord. Be unashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Everywhere we see God Bless America. Have you noticed that? There are flags hanging everywhere. There are these posters and they are being stuck up on windows and in shops and in the mall, God Bless America.

Those are banners or swords and people are unashamed to stick them up where they can be seen. But think of a poster or pole that holds a banner. And tonight I want you to think of banners and think of them as your talents, your

gifts, your abilities, opportunities you have as the pole and think of the banner as the name of God. And every day you and I have a chance to raise up the name of the Lord with your talent. Raise up the name of the Lord with your gift. Raise up the name of the Lord at work, wherever you are, opportunities, think of that as the pole.

Now tonight I want to ask you how many times do you actually seek to find that pole that you can attach the name of the Lord to and raise it up to the world. Now you're going to find out how important it is that you actually do that tonight.

We have a couple who is going to be coming to church here really soon. They have been nominated for Dove Awards, an award-winning couple. They're published by Word and Maranatha. They're going to be spearheading a choir here. And they are a phenomenally gifted team. And one of the things, you know, some of you sitting here, I want to encourage you that may be the pole you use to raise up the name of the Lord. And, by the way, what is wonderful about this team is, whether you read music or not it doesn't matter, they are really able to motivate and minister and teach people how to be fabulously able to use their gifts in a choir even if they can't read music. So let me encourage you today, maybe that is your gift. Maybe singing is your gift. Maybe encouraging others is your gift. Maybe taking care of children, whatever. But that is that stick, that post that raises up the banner.

Would you please take a look at Exodus 17 with me. Now this is a very wonderful passage that we could be on all night. We won't be on it all night, but I would like you all to read it with me, if you would. Exodus 17: 8-16, and let's read it out loud so we can all stay awake and we are all together. Okay? "Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. . . And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed. And when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the Lord said unto Moses, write this for a memorial in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar and called the name of it Jehovah-Nissi. For he said, because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

Now you notice the name was Jehovah-Nissi. One more time let's say it together. Jehovah-Nissi. In fact, I want you to make believe that you are holding up a stick. This may help you memorize this. But go ahead and say Jehovah-Nissi when you hold your hand. Say Jehovah-Nissi. Do it twice. Jehovah-Nissi. Do it again. Jehovah-Nissi. Break out of your comfort zone. Say Jehovah-Nissi. (audience laughed) There you go. And those of you who didn't, come on, give me a break. You must raise your hands at football games and go yea or something once in a while, but Nissi is that banner. You know Nissan, you drive a Nissan, okay, the two are unrelated. But, anyway, it sounds kind of like it. (audience laughed) Nissi, all right? Little bitty Nissans that are kind of sissy are Nissi. Okay.

Jehovah-Nissi, that's a banner. You're declaring the name of God. Okay? Now, this is the first time, by the way, Exodus, Chapter 17, verse 15, is the first time this passage that uses Jehovah-Nissi as the name of God as the banner. Now, we're going to go back and take a look and see what in the world does this passage of this famous battle have anything to do with us at all. It has actually everything to do with us. I'm going to ask you, if you will, to pull out your pens, okay, or pencils or whatever, and if you have —did you bring a Bible? Did anyone bring a Bible tonight? Okay. How many of you brought pens or pencils? Okay. Raise your hand. Great. I want all of you to be using them tonight because we're going to go through this. I'm not going to rush through, but I'd like you all to remember these key points, especially in today's day and age. This will influence how you watch television, how you watch current events, how you deal with the tomorrows as well as today. This is a very, very important study understanding the power of the banner Jehovah, understand the power of the banner Jehovah. So please tonight stay with me and let's underline and let's learn.

First of all, notice it says, "Then came Amalek and he fought with Israel and Rephidim." The reason I'm going to read through it again is because that way it will be easier to find the place I'm talking about. "And Moses said unto Joshua, choose out some men, go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I'm going to stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand." Would you underline rod of God in mine hand. Now there is a time that you've heard the word rod before, Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou annointest my head with oil, My cup runs over. Okay. You've heard the psalmist. You've heard who was

a shepherd talk about thy rod and thy staff. Just to let you know, the rod was more of a club. Whenever the wolf or the lion or whatever came to the sheep, you would use that to pound the wolf pretty hard and kill him if necessary. Now, the staff or a crook, a long stick, was used also to defend, but sometimes also to catch a lamb maybe that had fallen off a cliff and was barely on a ledge and actually draw it back. One is a club, one is used to draw back errant or wandering sheep. Are you all with me?

Now he is holding up a rod. Now he is going to have to hold up his arms, and as you notice in this battle, when his arms started going down, they started losing the battle. Now you're probably thinking to yourself you know, the Lord really should have thought this through because I bet that rod, if it's a club that hammers somebody over the head, it would be a lot easier holding his arms up without a rod. But you know, the Lord still knows what he is doing. What it is this is a banner. it is a statement. And it's a statement that we as believers have to be willing to make, which is, sometimes you're simply going to have to get in a fight with the world, the flesh and the devil. Period. Sometimes you're going to simply have to say no to saving your life. Sometimes you're going to have to say no to the flesh. In fact, you're going to have to put it to death. The rod clubbed to death animals that were threatening the body of Christ, the lambs, the sheep. The parallels are all there in scripture.

So here we have in this battle, he has a rod. Now what you've just underlined, remember it's kind of a club and so he has this, it's in his hand. And it goes on to say, "And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed." In other words, as long as his hands were up in the air and he's praising the Lord, he's celebrating, he's however you want to see raising your hands unto the Lord, that he's being obedient. Whenever he held up his hand, Israel was winning, and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. I'm going to tell you something. In your life, if you're ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, you hide the banner, you don't raise it high in your life, you're going to find that you're whipped a lot easier than when the banner is raised up. Are you all with me?

And this battle was won and lost based upon the willingness to raise up this rod, to raise up this banner, to make a statement, Here am I. Now as you continue in this, look at this. It says, when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed, the enemy prevailed. Amalek is very parallel to the flesh, the world and the devil. "And Joshua discomfited

Amalek.” Do you all know what discomfited means? Well, it basically means it made his life real miserable. You know what I’m saying? He discomfited. And that’s an understatement with the edge of his sword. I guess he was a little uncomfortable when that edge of the sword hit him and it says, “He was discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword, and then the Lord said to Moses, write this for a memorial in a book.” Would you underline a memorial in a book. Underline those words, a memorial in a book. We’re learning something with this. In fact, fill in number one. This is a habit of a successful warrior. If you want to be somebody who knows God’s Word, knows how to battle, you know, against the enemy, be willing to, number one, take some notes. Take notes. Fill in number one down there where it says take and there is a blank next to it. Take notes.

Have you ever gone to class and you sit there and you kind of space out and you daydream and then suddenly the exam comes and you look at the questions as if you’ve never even seen the subject before? Anybody? (audience laughed) Okay. You know what the problem was? You weren’t taking notes. Now I — being artistic when I was a kid, I would start taking notes, but by the end of it, it was a doodle. It was like going all the way down the page and around the other side. You know what I’m saying? So I really did good on the beginning of tests, but at the end of the test I would just want to draw pictures. But the teacher wouldn’t take it. What I want to encourage you in is one of the things that Moses realized is — by the way, liberals for years said Moses didn’t have the ability to write. They didn’t have the ability to write. And, of course, now we know of course he had the ability to write. But the liberals for years said, oh, this shows the Word of God is wrong because Moses couldn’t write and they couldn’t write. They had quite an extensive ability to write probably in three or four different languages. Moses, of course, being trained in Pharaoh’s court had a phenomenal gifting as far as other men that were working with him. But it says write it as a memorial. That’s a memorial like as if he had built an altar. Do it as a memory. Jesus says about communion, what, do this in what, memory of Me. So he said do this as a memorial. Do this so we can remember this moment. Remember this moment.

We need to remember the good moments. We need to remember the powerful moments. We need to remember — when you walk out of here, the reason we put these notes down so you can fill in the blanks isn’t because I

just want to keep you from being bored and it's not just because we want extra paper to pick up after the service. The real reason we do it is because I want you all to remember — I need to remember as well, so when we walk from here, we can apply it. Moses was saying, you know what, I noticed something today. We need to make a note of it. Whenever I raise my hands and I obey God, things go good. And whenever I drop my hands and I disobey God, things go in the toilet. I don't know if they had toilets. Things go in the creek.

So what we're going to do is we're going to write it down as a memorial to do this from this point on. And whenever Israel obeyed, guess what happened? Things went well. When Israel disobeyed, things went in the creek. Okay.

The next it says here is, look at this. And rehearse it in the ears of Joshua. It's easy to fly past these verses, but these are so incredible. First of all, write it down and then rehearse it in the ears of Joshua. I was an actor for a lot of years. And whenever you come to rehearsal as an actor or a musician, you're coming to refine it. You're not rehearsing for any reason except to get your part better, get it down, get it locked down, get it refined, make sure your delivery is correct, make sure that your memory is correct, make sure that you say the right lines at the right time or else it looks really dumb off the stage. People are watching the show and all of a sudden you do page 17 in page four's place. Nobody knows what is going on.

So the purpose of a rehearsal is what? To remember it better than ever. To practice it until it becomes a natural part of you. There are a lot of actors that you see that read lines. In fact, have you ever gone to a movie and you said, oh, man, she is a terrible actress. Why do you say that? It's not because she stops in the middle of the movie, looks at the screen, looks at the audience and goes, oh, I forgot my lines. That's not what it is. Actually she memorized her lines. The problem is you don't believe she is living those lines. Are you all with me?

Now, when you rehearse, what happens is you get to a certain point in music and in the arts when you rehearse it correctly, eventually you go from, okay, I got to remember, I got to remember, I got to remember, I got to remember to after a while you're remembering naturally and then you start thinking I've got to feel it, I've got to live it. Who is this character? And you start developing it. Some people get a little too far in it as actors, you know, and they feel the part all

the time and they become the part. But I will tell you something. What happens inevitably is when you rehearse it properly, it's a natural part of you. And you begin to live it and you begin to act it. So when you're in front of people and you act out that part, if you're weeping, they believe you. And if you're laughing, they believe you because you've rehearsed it, because you're not thinking, what's the next word, what's the next word.

A lot of actresses or actors though you're seeing them going, and then I went to the house. Oh, look at the bird fly into the sky. What they're doing is all they're doing is they are simply spitting out the words hoping they get it in order. But he says rehearse them and where did he say to rehearse them? In the ears of Joshua. You know why? He's saying, first of all, learn God's word. Second of all, repeat it over and over and third of all, find people whom you can practice the word of God with so that one to the other you can refine and sharpen and you'll be reminded of Joshua constantly, this is what God did. This is what God did. And Joshua turns around in faith, filled with faith more and more. Yeah, this is what God did. Faith comes by what? Hearing and hearing from what? The word of God.

You have right here in this passage that verse. Faith comes by hearing. Joshua heard it. Hearing comes from the Word of God, the written Word of God. Oh, the memorial, he just wrote it down. Get it? The way you and I build our faith, faith comes by hearing and hearing comes from the Word of God. Constantly memorizing scripture, constantly digging into the scripture, refining ourselves. Take your notes home with these verses and read them over, over, over, over. Dig new things out of them. Rehearse them. Rehearse the Word. Get to know it as a part of your life. Because when it becomes a part of your life and not just a theological quest, then you'll find power in your life. Amen? That's exactly what God wants us to have too is power in our lives. So here we go again.

It says here — this is what he says it's going to be in the ears of Joshua and he goes onto say, "For I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." He's talking about a curse here that Amalek has. There are a number of reasons that Amalek has this curse, but he says I'm going to basically wipe out even the memory of Amalek. And he connects that to the passage of rehearse the Word of God.

If what you want to do is not dwell upon depressing things, you're going to have to distract yourself to an attraction that fills that space. If you don't want to dwell on bitter things, then focus on things that celebrate. Whatever things are pure, whatever things are holy, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report. Think on these things. The Bible is teaching if you're getting to the point where you're focused and obsessed with the negative, there's a reason for it. Because that's what you're staring at. The Word of God is saying here I want you to remember the great deeds this day that I have done says God. I want you to write them down and say them to each other. You know why? Because he said basically I don't want you overwhelmed. I want you to know that Amalek is going to be even put out of your memory.

How many of you have ever had a painful memory in life in a relationship or anything else? If that's all you think about 24 hours a day, what happens? You get obsessively bitter about it. Are you all with me? But if you fill your life with things of joy and goals and purposes that are glorious to God, things that are exciting and give you celebration, you know what happens inevitably, that stuff gets pushed out of your life and out of your thinking. Right? Amen? That's what God wants. He wants you to have removed from your remembrance and your thinking those things that Satan will use to continue to wound you. And so if I can encourage you in that, you're going to have to not just push things out of your mind, but replace them with something else. And He is teaching these men how to — this by the way is the first time that the concept of writing the word of God down in a book is even written in the Word of God. But here He is saying basically, don't just try to push things out of your mind, also your remembrance even Amalek is going to be pushed out but then replace it — rehearse the Word of God and place it in its place. It goes on and says, "And Moses built an altar." Would you underline the words built an altar. Moses said basically thank you, Father, for what you've done. If God has saved you, if you've been born again, if God has touched your life, you should have altars in your life as a memory. You should build altars. Be willing to sacrifice unto the Lord. Say thank you to the Lord. And this is where He called out to the name Jehovah-Nissi. If you want to underline that, that's to remind you where this comes from. For he said, "Because the Lord has sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation"

Now, he's just said I'm going to wipe out Amalek and we actually see through history how Saul pursued Amalek's, you know, children and generations and how David did it and later on others did it, Simeon, who is during Hezekiah's dynasty. But when you underline generation to generation, you go, wait a minute. I thought he just said he's going to get rid of Amalek and over here he's from generation to generation — he's still sticking around. He's still a hassle. Do you know what this is? This is protracted warfare.

During the Vietnamese war, one of the things that came back and were published were papers that dealt with — that had been taken from Viet Cong or had been found on prisoners or on bodies of Viet Cong. were little pamphlets. Mao Tse-tung's pamphlets and other pamphlets. And within these pamphlets it said don't expect to win the war tomorrow. This is a protracted war. Now, protracted warfare means it isn't going to happen like this. It's going to be long term. This is just an investment that is long term. Expect to fight and fight and fight and then fight some more. Protracted warfare.

Now, we've talked about how we as an American culture have the kind of McDonalds' s drive-up, get-it-in-five-minutes-or-get-ticked-off mentality. You know what I'm saying? We have quick food mentality, and we've got to get everything really quick. What God is teaching here is, let me just tell you something about this guy Amalek. Generation and generation are going to have a battle with the world, the flesh and the devil. Deal with it now. Sit back and just accept it. It's going to be a fistfight. Every day you wake up, you know, gentlemen, do you say to your wife, don't bother cooking. Yesterday you cooked. You cooked three meals. In fact, you cooked three meals and they were so good, I'll tell you the truth, I'll never need to eat again. Don't bother. (audience laughed)

You don't do that. Why? It's one of those hassles. We've got to do it every day. We've got to do it over and over and over and over. In fact, right now you could wear yourself out thinking how many more meals you're going to have to eat until the end of your life. If you live another fifty years, you think about how many days are in a year and then you think about how many meals, 1,500 meals, 1,600 meals a year. Whoa, for ten years, 16,000 meals times another five. Oh, my gosh, 85,000 meals. Women, you could have a breakdown thinking about that for all those people in your family. Right?

But you don't think about it. Why? You've accepted the protracted warfare of having to eat and cook. Right?

Now, it sounds silly, but isn't it true? You don't wake up the next morning, your lungs expand, you go, oh, hassle, I've got to do it again today. You go through the day going — you don't do that. Why? You accepted way early on the concept of breathing is going to go on every day. The other night Maria and I were talking and a couple of the children were with us. And I thought, you know what, every muscle gets to rest when you fall asleep at night except your heart. It doesn't get to take a break. The day it takes a break and you're broke. (audience laughed) You know what I'm saying? Have you ever thought about that? Have you ever thought about that heart's going, dude, when do I get a break? I mean, it just goes nonstop. It has to go nonstop — 24/7, 24/7, day after day after day after day — some people have a century. And that heart went for all that time.

It's a protracted war. It has accepted its responsibility. When it comes to breathing, we accept it early on that walking down the stairs, up the stairs, we realize that breathing thing has got to happen all the time. That's exactly what the battle of the world, the flesh and the devil is like. It's generation to generation. Just deal with it. The Amalek, the world, the flesh and the devil is there. It would be great if the Lord said you'll have one temptation in your life, past that point, everything is easy. That would be nice, wouldn't it? Then you'll only have one moment to resist temptation. If you pass that, no more problems. Wouldn't that be great?

But, see, Joseph knew when he ran from Potiphar's wife's house, it could happen again. That can happen a hundred more times and he was going to have to say no a hundred more times. And what it was was Joseph never failed to raise the banner of the Lord. Godly men and women in scripture never failed to raise the banner of the Lord because what they're doing is they're publicly proclaiming if you're coming in this direction, this is where I stand. Are you all with me?

There is a power in this Nissi that we're going to see in our Jehovah-Nissi. There is an incredible power and it's a guarantee that he will stamp out one day the world, the flesh and the devil. I guarantee, as they say. But we're going to have to be obedient in how we deal with it. So, if you'll fill in number one, it says, of course, take notes. Now,

this is the one that says habits of a successful warrior. Number two, memorize the scripture. I cannot encourage you enough to memorize the Word of God with your children, with your spouse and with your friends if you're single. So what do banners do? What do banners do? Number one, if you'll fill this in. They precede. They go before. They go forward. They precede. They go before and they go forward. Would you read Exodus 13:21 with me? "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way." The banner goes before you. You read stories about how the banner would fall in battle and suddenly the men would become frightened and disoriented, but suddenly somebody would raise the banner up again and they would go forward again. You read about the Greeks in battle that was important, about the Romans in battle. In fact, the Nazis designed their banners after the Roman legions.

And if you've ever seen pictures of these hundreds, even thousands of banners marching down streets in Berlin and other places in the world, and each one of the banners had a different location, had a different maybe SS or whatever it was. They identified themselves within the kingdom of Nazism basically, but what their specific job was. Now, you and I — now, Satan's got it figured out, the rearing of a banner, to have conquest. When school gave up prayer, when there was a group of people dedicated — lawyers in the ACLU and other organizations to taking prayer from the school, they had raised up a banner and they went in with this banner and they accomplished their task and they had their victory. They felt they had taken that parcel of land. Their banner stated that. Now, I think God is calling us to take those banners down and raise a new banner. You hear about how forts are taken and a flag, when they conquer a fort, the enemy's flag is pulled down, their banner, and a new banner is put up. That's what Jehovah-Nissi means. It means start taking their territory, which is really God's territory back, start pulling down Satan's flag that glorifies him and start putting up the flag of God and give God the glory. Bring the name of Jehovah back into prominence as ruling that part of your culture. God has called us to be that kind of people. He wants to be Nissi.

Now let me tell you something. When you have a banner, and it can be a glorious beautiful banner, but there is no rod, there is no stick obediently holding it up, you will pull that stick out and what you have is this beautiful banner just crumpled on the floor where people can step on it. I'm going to tell you something. There's really no middle

of the road in this world. You either raise the banner or you leave it on the ground for people to stomp on. Now, listen, let me tell you about the Christian faith. You're either raising the banner of Christ in your life or you're leaving it on the ground for people to stomp on and to mock.

Now it's much better to have that banner raised up because it goes before and it gives power. The Romans actually had their finest men that surrounded — and listen carefully — that surrounded the banner. You know why? Because if one man fell, another would catch it and keep moving forward. And if that man fell — they also had some of the greatest warriors. You know why? Because they had men who could fight with one hand while holding the banner with the other. They were powerful men. Some of the largest men, in fact, would hold the banner. The job of holding the banner was an absolute privilege.

In fact, if you look at Judges, Chapter 7:6-7, we're going to find about a certain personality that God is looking for in kingdom dwellers that will carry banners.