

His Banner Over Me

Exodus 17:8–15

Tuesday July 13, 2021

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But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

—2 Corinthians 2:14 ESV

In the 1970s, a popular song in children and youth ministries in all kinds of churches was “His Banner over Me is Love.” It had fun motions for kids. It had a whole bunch of different verses. It could be one of the most iconic children’s songs of that decade. One of the main lines of the song was,

“The Lord is mine and I am His
His banner over me is love.”

When we sang the part about the banner being over us, we lifted our hands above our heads and made an arch. The gesture seems to be natural only to ballet dancers. Teachers who led us as kids in singing this song said the arch we made over our heads represented the banner of God’s love over us.

Each teacher explained why a banner over our heads expressing God’s love should be a good thing in our young Christian lives. None of them said the same thing. As you might imagine, I was a curious child. None of the explanations the well-intended teachers in my home church gave added up to me. But, I liked the song and understood other lyrics in it—just not the main line.

It wasn’t until I was in college that I would hear a professor in a Bible class explain how great God’s banner over us is with a clear explanation of that banner’s significance. His description made sense. It expanded my understanding of one of God’s most significant names—Jehovah-Nissi.

Not one of the more commonly known biblical names for God, Jehovah Nissi means “the Lord is my banner.” A banner in ancient times would be raised above the armies of a king. The banner might have the name of the king. It might use an animal or a symbol to represent the kingdom itself. In more recent centuries (and before modern warfare), the banner might have

a royal family’s coat of arms. The symbol on the banner of a kingdom would have its modern parallel in the corporate logo.

The army would go out with this arched banner held at either end by the troops’ banner bearers or standard-bearers. Their march under the banner from their kingdom to the battlefield would anticipate the triumph to come. When they returned in victory from the battle, they would force all of the captives of war to march back to the victorious kingdom under the same banner—now a banner of accomplished victory. The prisoners would be disgraced and humiliated in being led from their homeland to their conquerors’ kingdom.

So an ancient banner represented war and victory for your king and his kingdom. In Exodus 17:15, after a miraculous victory by the Nation of Israel over the Amalekites, Moses declared Israel’s God to be “Jehovah-Nissi”—The Lord is my banner. He is my victory. He is my triumph.

Paul declares in 2 Corinthians 2:14, “But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession.” He is our victory banner. He is our triumph. Based on this incredible biblical imagery and truth, I sang as I child, “His banner over me is love!”

No matter what you are going through today, God secured your victory in Christ. Jesus triumphed over sin, death, and the grave for you. No matter what happens in your life, nothing can take away what Christ secured in His victory for you! The Lord is your banner!

Today, nothing can destroy or defeat you. Christ secured your victory. He is your triumphant banner!

Today’s Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for securing victory for me. Help me live in the reality of that victory. Please keep me from being defeated by circumstances and voices that would overwhelm me. May I live with a joy that only comes from being in our Victor, Jesus Christ! —Amen