

Let everything that has breath
praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Psalms 150:6

Praise Points
with Karen Holland

Life up a Standard; A Standard of Praise

These different translations of the following verse caught my attention. The phrase 'Lift up a standard or banner' really stands out, especially in the Amplified Version. It seems that lifting a standard against the enemy puts the enemy to flight.

Isaiah 59:19(NKJV) *So shall they fear The name of the LORD from the west, And His glory from the rising of the sun; When the enemy comes in like a flood, **The Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him.***

Isaiah 59:19(AMP) *So [as the result of the Messiah's intervention] they shall [reverently] fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, **the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him and put him to flight** [for He will come like a rushing stream which the breath of the Lord drives].*

Isaiah 59:19(DARBY) *And they shall fear the name of Jehovah from the west, and from the rising of the sun, his glory. When the adversary shall come in like a flood, **the Spirit of Jehovah will lift up a banner against him.***

The Spirit of the Lord lifting a standard or banner against the enemy brings to mind another passage, Exodus 17:8-16. Here Moses was leading the Israelites in the wilderness and they came under attack by Amalekites, descendants of Amalek, a grandson of Esau. In verse 15, after the battle is won, Moses builds an altar and names it Jehovah Nissi.

Nissi is translated in the NASB as "The Lord is My Banner." The derivative translation is "nes." The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament provides the following insights into the meaning of the word:

In the OT, nes generally means a rallying point or standard which drew people together for some common action or for the communication of important information. This usually happened on a high or conspicuous place within the camp or community. There, a signal pole, sometimes with an ensign attached, could be raised as a point of focus or object of hope. ... People would rally together around a nes for various purposes, one of the most important being the gathering of troops for war. ... The standard was usually raised on a mountain or other high place.

Moses standing at the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand showed whose camp he and his people belonged to. It rallied the Lord's people to fight the Amalekites; it gave them encouragement and hope. When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. The rod in Moses hand was given by the Lord representing divine appointment/ intervention. The constantly upraised hands of Moses showed the fervent prayers of his heart as he witnessed the battle.

The raised standard or banner shows whose camp a people belong to. Raising the Lord's banner encourages His people that they belong to Him and are under His protection - He will fight for them. Raising the Lord's banner also intimidates the enemy putting the enemy to flight. Raising the Lord's banner leads His people forward to victory! This was true in the past, is true now and will continue to be true in the future.

Psalm 60:4-5(NASB) *You have given a banner to those who fear You, That it may be displayed because of the truth. That Your beloved may be delivered, save with Your right hand, and hear me.*

What is the Lord's banner over us - His people?

Song of Solomon 2:4(NKJV) *He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.*

It's interesting to note that the (AMP) version for Isaiah 59:19 references the below verses which also mention the feast or banquet hall.

Matt 8:11(AMP) *I tell you, many will come from east and west, and will sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,*

Luke 13:29(AMP) *And [people] will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit down (feast at table) in the kingdom of God.*

Luke 13:29 appears in a discussion about the narrow door or gate and is clearly looking forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9). Many will try to enter or come to the marriage supper of the Lamb but only those that know Jesus as Lord and are known by Him will be invited. Lifting up the Lord's banner and the narrow gate are also seen in the assurance of Zion's salvation.

Isaiah 62:8-10(NKJV) *The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength: "Surely I will no longer give your grain as food for your enemies; and the sons of the foreigner shall not drink your new wine, for which you have labored. But those who have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; those who have brought it together shall drink it in My holy courts." Go through, go through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! Take out the stones, lift up a banner for the peoples!*

Isaiah 60:18(NIV) *No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.*

Isaiah 11:10-12(NIV) *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. In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea. He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.*

Notice the banner that will be raised over Zion. The Messiah will stand as a "nes" for His people to signal them to gather together and return to their Promised Land. Jesus is our standard — our rallying point for victory (Romans 8:37). Through Him we have victory over death as well as life's battles. And we don't just barely win the battles in Him — we win decisively!

Isaiah looked forward to a time that will see an event comparable in significance to the Exodus event. This will contrast with the Exodus, however, those who return will be the remnant of a larger people, while it was the greatly enlarged family of Jacob that left Egypt under Moses. The events will also differ because this time the people will not move together as a body from one point of departure but will come together from many lands and various points of the compass. Instead of going forth under a great leader, they will come together seeking a greater leader still - the Messiah King.

It is significant that the Root of Jesse, the banner, is raised over Zion. Zion is the dwelling place of the LORD, the city of God, the holy mountain. This is reflected in the following Psalms, classified as Songs of Zion: Psalms 46, 48, 76, 84, 87, and 122. These songs were sung on

pilgrimages to Zion, they express a yearning to be in the Lord's presence, His dwelling place - His courts, in His protection and favor.

The songs of Zion were based on the fact of the Lord's past choice of Zion, and His past choice of David as King. Isaiah looks to the future when Zion is delivered and the Root of Jesse, the anointed one will be raised up. Zion is the place where the King dwells and is enthroned. Zion is a city of praise, everlasting joy crowning the Lord's people. It is entered with singing.

Isaiah 35:8-10(NIV) *And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*

Can we make this pilgrimage to Zion, the dwelling place of the Lord now today? How do we enter His courts, His presence?

Psalms 100:2, 4(NKJV) *Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.*

Psalms 22:3(NKJV) *But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel.*

We can come into His dwelling place, His courts, His presence by going thru the gates of praise, by lifting up a standard of praise. This greatly pleases the Lord, lifting a standard of praise, an offering, a sacrifice, the fruit of our lips.

Psalms 69:30-31(NKJV) *I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bull, Which has horns and hooves.*

Hebrews 13:15(NKJV) *Therefore by Him (Thru Jesus) let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.*

Let us lift up the standard of praise, lift it high. Let it be a rallying point for the Lord's people, showing the way, the way forward to victory. Let us raise praise purposefully and prayerfully as a standard against the enemy, "as awesome as an army with banners." (Song of Solomon 6:4,10) The fruit of our lips, everlasting joy, a banner lifted high marking the holy highway. Jesus the way, the truth and the life.

John 14:6(NKJV) *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

Romans 8:37-39(NKJV) *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

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STANDARD OF PRAISE

Dan Wilt

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JESUS WE WILL PREPARE AN ALTAR
JESUS WE WILL BRING COSTLY GIFTS
JESUS WE WILL LIFT UP AN OFFERING

THE FRUIT OF OUR LIPS

JESUS WE WILL MAKE STRAIGHT A HIGHWAY
JESUS WE WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY
JESUS WE WILL MATURE AS PEOPLE
A PEOPLE OF PRAISE

WE WILL RAISE UP A STANDARD OF PRAISE
RECEIVE, LORD THIS OFFERING WE RAISE
WE RAISE UP A STANDARD OF PRAISE
TO YOUR GLORY, YOUR GLORIOUS NAME, O LORD
A STANDARD OF PRAISE

Album: I Will Lift Up My Hands

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