



Banner Word Study

In Hebrew, one word can have a number of different meanings. Often these meanings are related and form a thread of thought or expression that feed off each other. This adds richness to the essence of the concept being conveyed. At other times, the links between meanings are less obvious to the Western mind.

In delving into the Hebrew words of the Old Testament that refer to banners, I have discovered that modern concordances, commentaries and

dictionaries show significant divergence in their identification, spelling and definition of Hebrew words and their meanings.

In order to simplify things and remain consistent, I have adhered to the New International Version translation. In the instances where other versions seem to have better translations, I have included them with the version listed in brackets at the end.

An example of this is Isaiah 10:18. Here the Lord is speaking of total annihilation of the king of Assyria. Consider how the New International Version (NIV), the King James Version (KJV) and the Amplified Bible (AMP) translate it.

The splendour of his forests and fertile fields it will completely destroy, as when a sick (nasas) man wastes away. Isaiah 10:18 (NIV)

And shall consume the glory of his forest and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer (nasas) fainteth. Isaiah 10:18 (KJV)

The Lord will consume the glory of the [Assyrian's] forest and of his fruitful field, both soul and body; and it shall be as when a sick (nasas) man pines away or a standard-bearer (nasas) faints. Isaiah 10:18 (AMP)

In a future book, I will weave the different commentaries together and draw on the incredible richness of the truths half-hidden in Scripture concerning banners and their use in establishing and advancing the Kingdom of God.

From *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance* we will examine six Hebrew words:

- Nēs (19 verses)
- Nasas (2 verses)
- Ot (2 verses)
- Dagal (2 verses)
- Degel (14 verses)
- Toren (1 verse)

In the NIV, these words have been variously translated as banner, banners, battle standard, be unfurled, flagstaff, in procession, lift up banners, pole, standard, standards and troops with banners.

Why

Wielding Banners

Nēs נָס

Nēs (5812 *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance*)
Nēs is translated: **banner (14 times); battle standard (2 times); pole (2 times); signal (once).**

It is also translated: *The who, what, when, where, why and how of banners in the hands of Christians*

Meanings

nēs (noun) literally means “that which shines” or “that which is lifted up.” A banner provides a rallying point to kindle hope or united action and is usually raised on special occasions. It could be a sign like a miracle, a signal of war (especially to the nations for destruction or deliverance of Israel), a signal to direct refugees to Zion or a warning to flee. It was usually raised on special occasions. The word nēs is used for the pole supporting the bronze serpent.

Bible Verses

Moses built an altar and called it the LORD is my Banner. (nēs). Exodus 17:15.

Moses built an altar and called it The Lord is my Banner. Exodus 17:15. (The usual translation, “The Lord is my Banner,” is from *Yahweh Nissi*, which is derived from the word nēs. This phrase is translated as “Hashem is my MIRACLE” in the Tanakh, page 112.)

The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole (nēs); anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” Numbers 21:8.

So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole (nēs). Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived. Numbers 21:9.

But for those who fear you, you have raised a banner (nēs) to be unfurled (nasas) against the bow. Psalm 60:4.

He lifts up a banner (nēs) for the distant nations, he whistles for those at the ends of the earth. Here they come, swiftly and speedily! Isaiah 5:26.

In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner (nēs) for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. Isaiah 11:10.

He will raise a banner (nēs) for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth. Isaiah 11:12.

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