

Awakenings Prayer Institute

Working With

SIGNATURE SCRIPTURE



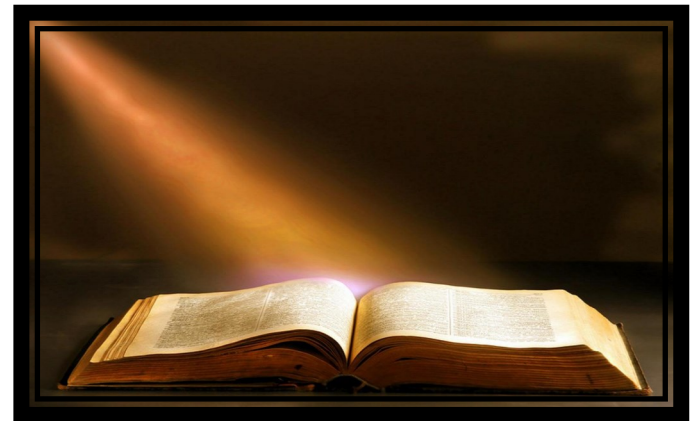
God's Signature Moments

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***Praying God's Signature
Moments in our Lives***

Praying the Scriptures that Address Our Deep Need

Praying Over Our High Points

Jehovah Nissi, Fulfill Your Calling in my Life.

This moment for Kathryn and me came to be known as “the hug.” The year was 1984. I had just walked the aisle at graduation from seminary, and there was my devoted wife, ready to sweep me up in her arms. What a moment of triumph! A banner moment indeed! After four long years of preparing to preach, I was finally graduating! Earlier on, God had made his calling clear. Now the training was complete. But where would we go to fulfill that calling? And could I do it? Could I actually preach God’s Word in such a way that would sustain the life of a congregation through all the challenges of life? I needed assurance that God was going to put me to work for him. And I needed assurance that this work we would do would matter.

As I began to ponder what my soul needed on the night of seminary graduation, I was drawn to the name, *Jehovah Nissi, the Lord My banner*. I read the back story in Exodus 17:8-16, where Moses stood upon the mountain above the battle zone with the staff of God in his hands. As Moses held up the symbol of God’s mighty deliverance, the Israelites prevailed in battle. Aaron and Hur stood by his side, holding up his hands. After the battle was won, Moses built an altar and named it, “The Lord My Banner.” And he said, “For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD.” God had been a banner of victory for the nation. He had not called them to defeat—he had called them to prevail. And so my breath prayer coming out of this Scripture and my soul’s deep need became *Jehovah Nissi, Fulfill Your Calling in my Life*.

As I reflected upon this passage, I began to consider all of the people who had held up my hands in ministry since that first pastorate began in 1984. I considered how as I was graduating, and wondering where I would be going, members of that first church were praying for me. Though they did not know my name, God

passage by looking up either the name for God you have chosen, eg: “Good Shepherd” or by looking up the word that describes your need, eg: “comfort.”

Notice how these scriptures give a story or setting that reveals the character of God. Consider which scripture you are drawn to that most effectively reveals the character and person of God to you.

If it is a lengthy passage, select only a portion that would be appropriate for *lectio divina*. For instance, in my low point prayer, “Lion of Judah, Grant Us Your Courage,” I found the name “Lion of Judah” in Revelation 5. Rather than use the whole chapter, verses 1-5 work well for a *lectio session*.

Write out the Scripture passage in your journal. You are now ready to spend 25-30 minutes praying this text in a *lectio* session.

As you conclude your *lectio* time, spend a few minutes praying your Breath Prayer, then journal your insights.

Reflect on your Signature Scripture with these questions:

- 1. What did you gain from your *lectio* time?**
- 2. How did praying over this text influence how you experienced your breath prayer?**
- 3. What did you learn about the character of God?**
- 4. How do you see this passage forming your own character?**

Praying God's Signature Moments In Your Life



Finding a Signature Scripture begins with developing a Breath Prayer that reflects your need at a significant moment in your life. You can look back over your life and recall such moments or you can begin with the present moment.

Using your journal, write down the Breath Prayer you have developed for the moment you have selected. As you write it down consider how it resonates with a deep need in your life.

What name of God did you choose for your prayer?

Consult the Awakenings Prayer booklet, "An Introduction to Breath Prayer." Take a few minutes and review the scripture selections that are listed with this particular name of the Lord. Alternatively, you may use a concordance to search for a Scripture

was holding up my arms through their prayers. And their prayers saw me through eight eventful years in which God honed that gift and call to preach. As I meditated on Exodus 17, I saw that members of God's army had indeed looked to me and gained courage to fight on one more day. I recognized that God had not called me to fail. Even through all the struggles, he was using me as I stood before his people week after week, with the Bible of God in my hands, the source and symbol of their victory.

Kathryn had lifted up my hands through four long years of seminary training. And over the years she has been joined by many other faithful warriors who have lifted up my hands in two pastorates dating back to 1984. As I pray several sessions of Lectio on Exodus 17, my heart is filled with confidence and gratitude.



Praying Over our Low Points

Lion of Judah, Grant us Your Courage

In November of 2005, I was attracted to another of the Lord's magnificent titles, "Lion of Judah." I pondered the verse in Revelation 5 where Jesus is revealed by this name. A prayer formed in my heart from that text, "*Lion of Judah, grant me your courage.*" Over several days, I prayed over the entire chapter of Revelation 5. I saw how the courage of Jesus gave him power to lay down his life and then be declared worthy of all power, even power to judge the world. After all, he was judged by the world. That's why God had committed all judgment to the Son.

Later, I saw another name of Christ, "Lamb of God," revealed in the same scripture. The passage shows that this is the Lamb that triumphed through death. And so my prayer became, "*Lamb of God, Triumph in our suffering.*" Both of these prayers from Revelation 5 proved vital when a few weeks later, our nephew was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor. Having a simple prayer on the breath gave our family courage and strength to look for Christ's triumph through our nephew's three-year battle with this aggressive cancer. The presence of Christ has sustained us through his battle and through his birth into eternity, December 13, 2008.

Praying *lectio* over these passages helped to deepen these breath prayers. We have gained a new appreciation for how God's character answers the deep needs of our souls.

The manner in which God works in these critical passages of life reveals more of his character and mission. We come to experience him as Jehovah Jireh, Lion of Judah, Father of

Mercies, Alpha and Omega, and The Bright Morning Star. We discern his purpose and his character. God has marked our lives through these passages, revealing to us how present he is in the mission of our lives.

