JM Jason Mayfield

SERMON OUTLINE FOR PASTORS

PRAYING JEHOVAH

Four Names of God That Tell You How He Answers Prayer

> Every name of God tells you how to expect Him to respond when you ask: Jehovah Nissi brings victory, Jehovah Jireh provides and sees, Jehovah Rapha heals, and Jehovah Shalom gives peace. So bring Him everything in prayer.

MAIN TEXT
Matthew 6:9-13

SERIES
The Name, Week 2 of 3

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BY
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AT A GLANCE

THE MESSAGE

1. No prayer shocks God. The centurion in Luke 7 asked Jesus to heal a servant he valued and did not want to replace, a self-interested request that Jesus called great faith, so bring God what you actually want, even when it is not particularly holy.
2. Jehovah Nissi, the Lord is my banner (Exodus 17:8-16). Israel won while Moses held up the staff, an obvious supernatural work, and the secret is "a hand upon the throne of the Lord." Get a hand on the throne in prayer and God goes before you and does what natural means cannot.
3. Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide (Genesis 22:9-14). The name can be read as He provides, He sees and He will be seen, and they work in concert. In a season of lack He sees what you are walking through and what is coming; before provision things feel more urgent than they are, and after it they seem smaller than they were.
4. Jehovah Rapha, the Lord your healer (Exodus 15:22-26). God made the bitter water sweet by a tree to reveal His character. Under the old covenant health depended on obedience; under the new covenant healing flows from the tree of Calvary (Isaiah 53:4-5), so healing is your portion and your covenant right.
5. Jehovah Shalom, the Lord is peace (Judges 6:24). God gives a peace that passes understanding, but you are a turbulent person and anything that takes faith will disrupt your peace. Do not let "I don't have a peace about it" overrule what honors God; make decisions balanced between peace and faith, as in "it seemed good to us and to the Holy Spirit."
6. Praying the names tees up your requests. Remind yourself who God is first, then ask; because He is Jehovah Rapha it is God's will to heal, so pray for the healing itself instead of "if it be Your will."



WATCH IT PREACHED

youtu.be/JuANTclbTd0



READ THE ARTICLE

jasonmayfield.com/messages/praying-jehovah

PREACHING NOTES

Before You Preach

This is week 2 of a three-week series on “hallowed be thy name” in the Lord’s Prayer. Week 1 prayed three names through the Trinity: the Father who is exalted, the Son who is empathetic and the Spirit who is empowering. This week turns toward asking God for things, while still praying His character.

The four names come from a worship song the congregation already knows, Elevation Worship’s “Jehovah,” which names Jehovah Nissi, Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah Rapha and Jehovah Shalom. The song is the memory device: people should leave able to pray these four names without a handout. If your church doesn’t sing it, use the four names on their own.

Tell the congregation up front that you’ll move around the Bible a lot. Each name has its own passage, so this message reads more Scripture aloud than most. The healing section carries the most weight; leave room for it.

Introduction

Open by praying the Lord’s Prayer together, as every week of the series.

> MATTHEW 6:9-13 ESV
>
> 9 Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

We’ve talked about your standing in Christ, the “Our Father.” Last week we started on “hallowed be thy name,” and when we pray the name of God, we’re praying God’s character. Today we transition into asking the Lord for things, but we’re still talking about who He is.

Here’s why that matters: every one of these names tells you how you can expect the Lord to respond to your request. The Lord might answer your prayer not because you prayed it well, but because that’s who He is and that’s how He operates. If you tap into the things the Lord is into, the Lord will do those things.

NO PRAYER SHOCKS GOD

When we ask God for things, we tend to either not pray at all or pray in such desperation that it clouds all our normal sense. And in a normal place of asking, we start second-guessing: “I don’t know if I can ask God for that. I don’t know if that’s appropriate to bring to the Lord.”

Frankly, no prayer shocks God. And no prayer is too selfish.

Illustration: the look. Ashleigh and I have a look we give each other when one of us says something obviously wrong. I think sometimes the Lord gives us that look when we come into prayer asking for things we obviously don't care about, trying to act right in His presence. "Are you for real right now? I know what you're really thinking. I know what you really want to ask. I'm just waiting for you to get enough courage to let it come over your lips."

> **LUKE 7:2-3** ESV
>
> [2] Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. [3] When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant.

> **LUKE 7:9-10** ESV
>
> [9] When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." [10] And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well.

Jesus noticed something in this centurion, a man who wasn't one of His people, and said He hadn't found faith like that in all of Israel. Where did it come from? The text tells us: the servant "was highly valued by him" (Luke 7:2).

We read this as a virtuous prayer, like passing along a prayer request for a coworker. But that's not why the centurion wanted him healed. This wasn't a friend or a cousin. It was a man who worked for him, probably a slave. "This guy does good work. I don't want to replace him. I don't want to find somebody new." It was a pretty self-interested request, and Jesus said, "not even in Israel have I found such faith" (Luke 7:9), and healed the man.

There is something about coming to the Lord with what you actually want. God is good enough to protect you from your dumb prayers, and if you don't pray some dumb prayers, you don't pray. Sometimes your prayer will be selfish and focused on you. When your back isn't acting right, when you don't have enough money to meet your obligations, when your spouse gets on your nerves, you can pray about that. God cares.

Illustration: "Don't point it out, pray it out." When we were first married, a pastor's wife told Ashleigh, "Don't point it out, pray it out." You can nag the people in your life all day long, or you can go over their head, take it to the Lord, and when they start acting right, just say, "Thank you, Lord."

Most of what you want to ask God for isn't particularly holy. We should pray for revival, for our leaders, for people to be saved. But I'd also like to afford these eggs. I want the lights to come on when I walk into my house. The hymn writer had it right:

> Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
>
> Oh, what needless pain we bear,
>
> All because we do not carry

> Everything to God in prayer!

Take everything to the Lord.

1. Jehovah Nissi: The Lord Is My Banner

Jehovah Nissi is a victorious name. He's a God who brings victory about.

> **EXODUS 17:8-16 ESV**
>
> 8 Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. 9 So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men,
> and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my
> hand." 10 So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went
> up to the top of the hill. 11 Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he
> lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12 But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it
> under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on
> the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. 13 And Joshua overwhelmed
> Amalek and his people with the sword. 14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a
> book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under
> heaven." 15 And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD Is My Banner, 16 saying, "A hand
> upon the throne of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

Moses' battle plan is, "I'm going to stand on a hill and hold up a stick." Moses built an altar and called it "The LORD Is My Banner" (Exodus 17:15), which is Jehovah Nissi in the Hebrew. A banner was like a big flag on a pole, carried into battle to show the cause people were fighting for. Moses is saying: when we go out to fight, we fight for the cause of the Lord, under the name of the Lord.

Illustration: the Situation Room. Picture someone walking into a meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with the plan: "Send our troops into battle, and I'll stand on a hill and hold a stick in the air. I'm pretty sure we'll win." Everyone in the room would call it the dumbest idea they'd ever heard. There's no logical reason it should work. So if that's what brings the victory, it is obviously the supernatural hand of God.

So when you pray, do you want things to work? Does your amen sound like "que sera, sera, whatever will be, will be," or like "so be it"? Do you pray things God doesn't even need to intervene in, hoping the wind blows the right direction? When you pray, you ought to want the supernatural power of God moving in that situation.

A HAND ON THE THRONE

Here is the secret, at the end of the story: "A hand upon the throne of the LORD!" (Exodus 17:16).

This is where we start in prayer. You bring your standing before the Lord, so you can come boldly before the throne of grace: "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16). You pray through the names of God and declare His holiness, His majesty and His character. Then you get into

Jehovah Nissi. It isn't about one kind of answer, healing or prosperity. It's that God wants to get supernaturally involved in whatever you ask Him.

When you pray, you're standing in the courts of heaven, talking to God Almighty under the authority of His Son, about things in this very earthly realm. How do you get something to happen? You get a hand on the throne. You get a hand on the throne and you pray, and you release a supernatural work into the earth. How do you get a hand on the throne? You start by praying.

Jehovah Nissi isn't just God. He's the God I operate under, the God above me, the God in front of me, the God who goes before me and works it out before I arrive. And if you try to get slick, He's the God who gets behind you: "the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard" (Isaiah 52:12).

Illustration: the phone call. This week a stranger called my personal cell phone at nine in the morning, looking for something he'd left at the church years ago. Normally I don't respond well to that, or to anything weird, and this call was weird. But for whatever reason I picked up, and my normal reaction wasn't happening. We talked for 30 or 45 minutes. He didn't know me, but he started speaking right into some leadership decisions I'd had to make and felt guilty about: "This is what you need to do. This is what the Lord has for you." I felt the prophetic on it, except here's what's crazy: it was all stuff I'd already done. Jehovah Nissi. You get a hand on the throne, and the Lord goes ahead of you and does a supernatural work. (This is personal testimony. Another preacher should use his own.)

2. Jehovah Jireh: The Lord Will Provide

The song says Jehovah Jireh meets my need. The older chorus says it this way: Jehovah Jireh, my provider.

> **GENESIS 22:9-14** ESV
>
> 9 When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. 11 But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 12 He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided."

God asked Abraham to do something that, from our side of knowing who the Lord is, seems unconscionable. Child sacrifice was practiced among the nations around Abraham, and God stops it at the last moment and provides a ram "instead of his son" (Genesis 22:13). Instead of his son.

HE PROVIDES, HE SEES, HE WILL BE SEEN

Without going too deep: there's some debate over what the name means. In the ESV, Abraham calls the place "The LORD will provide" (Genesis 22:14). Other views read the word as "the Lord sees," and others as "He will be seen," the Lord will appear. Your Bible may have a footnote on it.

These don't have to be at odds. They work in concert. If you're walking through lack right now, praying for a loved one, short financially, waiting on an opportunity, you may be saying, "I thought He was Jehovah Jireh." Be encouraged: not only does the Lord provide, He sees. There is nothing you are walking through right now that He does not see.

And He sees things you don't see. He sees what's coming. I'd hate to get a today blessing and sacrifice a next-week breakthrough. Just because you want it now doesn't mean now is the time. God may be about to do a work in your life that you wouldn't believe if someone told you: "For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told" (Habakkuk 1:5).

Illustration: the leather jackets. Some of my favorite provision stories come from when we were not doing so hot. I wanted a gray leather jacket to preach in. We didn't find one, but we found a black one on sale, and then another, and Ashleigh worked some discounts on her phone, and we got the second one for about $1.50. A few weeks later we had to go to a mall we never went to, because one of our phones broke and it had the Apple Store. We walked into the same store there, and there was the gray jacket. The jacket money was gone. Ashleigh went to work on her phone again, and we got it for about 36 cents. For you, it's just a jacket. For me, it was a gospel-preaching tool. That's Jehovah Jireh.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE PROVISION

We've seen bigger provision than jackets: serious medical bills, at one point a million dollars in medical bills hanging over our heads. Here is what I've learned:

- **Before the provision**, things feel way more urgent than they really are.
- **After the provision**, things seem much less significant than they really were.

[Praise break] If God has come through for you in any area of your life, take about 30 seconds and thank Him for coming through on your behalf.

3. Jehovah Rapha: The Lord Your Healer

> **EXODUS 15:22-26 ESV**
>
> 22 Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. 23 When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. 24 And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" 25 And he cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, 26 saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer."

Three days without water in the desert is a big deal. Then they find water at Marah, and it's bitter. Bitter water would look like spring water, but it was too salty or mineral-heavy to drink. God shows Moses a log; the Hebrew word can mean tree or wood. He throws it in, and the water becomes sweet. Then God says, "for I am the LORD, your healer" (Exodus 15:26). I am Jehovah Rapha.

One commentary I read this week put it this way: this moment of physical restoration sets the stage for God's self-revelation. God didn't make the bitter water sweet just to be nice. He did it to show you who He is.

When it comes to healing, more than anything else, you have to know who God is. If you've got things going on in your body, prioritize knowing how the Lord heals: not the process or the procedures, His character. God likes to heal people. God is about bringing broken things back to full restoration.

HEALING COMES FROM THE TREE

He throws the tree in the water, and the bitter is made sweet. Then, right before He gives the law of Moses, God tells Israel their health will be tied to their obedience: obey everything and He'll keep them healthy; disobey and disease will come. He even told them leprosy would show up in the promised land: "I put a case of leprous disease in a house in the land of your possession" (Leviticus 14:34).

While in the old covenant your healing depends on your obedience, in the new covenant, health comes from the tree. I'm talking about the cross. Because Jesus shed His blood at the cross, you can be healed. Not because you get it right all the time, not because of your morality or how much you pray or how many people you help. Your healing flows from the tree of Calvary: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

> **ISAIAH 53:4-5 ESV**
>
> 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

What the doctors can't figure out, God can figure out. Medical people are limited. We serve a God who is not limited.

Hear me: healing is your portion. Healing is your covenant right. Healing has already been provided. And if you say, "I believe that, and I don't feel good," then something has to change, in Jesus' name.

Illustration: the hospital. Multiple times in our marriage, Ashleigh and I have faced a critical medical diagnosis, lately more often for me. One time the doctors were preparing her: "He's probably not going to make it." Ashleigh got people praying while I lay in the hospital bed watching reality TV all day. And overnight, something changed, because people began to pray. It wasn't coincidence. He's Jehovah Rapha. (This is personal testimony. Another preacher should use his own.)

4. Jehovah Shalom: The Lord Is Peace

> **JUDGES 6:24** ESV
>
> 24 Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and called it, The LORD Is Peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites.

One of God's greatest gifts is peace. As someone who grew up in a volatile environment, with parents who weren't there, I can testify that a supernatural peace can reign in your heart in an obviously non-peaceful situation. The Bible calls it a peace "which surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7). Everything says you ought to be a wreck, and for some reason you're okay. That's the Spirit of God. He's Jehovah Shalom. Even the priestly blessing ends with peace: "the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace" (Numbers 6:26).

"I JUST DON'T HAVE A PEACE ABOUT IT"

Now let me say something about peace as it relates to prayer, because I want us to be a praying church that hears testimonies of breakthrough all the time. There's a saying that goes around the church everywhere. It sounds spiritual, but it's not. It sounds deep, but it's actually immature: people decide whether God wants them to do something based on whether they have peace about it.

Over the years I've heard many times, "I'm not going to do that. I just don't have a peace about it." And usually the thing they don't have peace about would obviously honor the Lord.

God is a God of peace. But you are a turbulent person. You don't stay at peace all the time. That's why Scripture tells us, "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" (Colossians 3:15): there will be moments it doesn't. You get worked up about things that don't matter. Remember: before the provision, things seem bigger than they are.

In reality, anything that takes faith is going to disrupt your peace. If it's big enough that you have to ask the Lord about it, it ought to disrupt your peace naturally.

Illustration: the move. When we came here, I gave up about half of my salary. That doesn't produce peace. It would have been more peaceful to come for more money. You don't give up that much and say, "I just felt

good about it." You do it in faith. (Another preacher should use his own example.)

Illustration: a seed and a tip. Throw a $20 bill in the offering this week, then write a $20,000 check next week, and see which one is more peaceful. But one is more significant. One is a seed, and one is a tip.

PETER DIDN'T WALK ON PEACE

> **MATTHEW 14:22-32 ESV**
>
> 22 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he
> dismissed the crowds. 23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself
> to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24 but the boat by this time was a long way from the
> land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night he
> came to them, walking on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were
> terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them,
> saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." 28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me
> to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water
> and came to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out,
> "Lord, save me." 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you
> of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

You don't walk on water because you feel good about it. Peter didn't say, "I've never done it before, but I feel like today might be my day." When he began to sink, Jesus caught him and said nothing about his peace. He talked about his faith: "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:31).

If you try to be governed solely by peace, you'll miss God. He calls you out of comfortable places, and your breakthrough will probably come through a response to the Lord you are not comfortable with: writing a big check, making the phone call, forgiving somebody, reaching out, stepping away from something, doing something you've never done. Don't miss your blessing because you think, "I'm not at peace, so I won't."

BETWEEN PEACE AND FAITH

God will give you peace, but you have to grab hold of faith. Somewhere between those two anchors, in prayer, you find a way to make balanced decisions: not under distress, not in panic, not from a place of freaking out, but from a reasonable, spiritual position.

In Acts 15 the apostles made a church-wide decision with ramifications still felt today, and it was probably a contentious meeting. At the end, they wrote to the churches, "it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28). That's a reasonable decision anchored between peace and faith.

And here's good news: if you make a wrong decision in faith, I've found that God honors ignorant faith faster than He honors solid rejection and disobedience.

For some of you, getting your hands out of your pockets and into the air in worship is your walking on the water. Take a step of faith. Serve. Take another step. And when you face distressing situations, invite His

peace in. As you take those steps, the peace of God will flood in, and you'll go places in the Lord you thought you never could.

Conclusion

He's Jehovah Nissi, Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah Rapha, Jehovah Shalom. When you go to prayer, you can pray these names and trust that God wants to do these things in your life.

Praying the names is how you tee up the ball. You remind yourself who God is, and then when you bring the thing you want done, you already know who you're talking to.

"IF IT BE YOUR WILL"

Go back to healing for a moment. Have you heard people pray for healing like this: "Lord, if it's Your will to heal, heal them"? What if Jesus had prayed that way?

Some people say, "Death is the ultimate healing." It is appointed for us to die: "it is appointed for man to die once" (Hebrews 9:27). But aren't you grateful Jesus never gave anybody "the ultimate healing"? Death happens; it's a natural reality. But healing is healing.

So is it God's will to heal? Yes, it's God's will to heal. Why? Because He's Jehovah Rapha. That's who He is. Get the character of God before your prayer, and then pray for the thing itself:

> God, it's Your will to heal this. Heal this elbow, in Jesus' name. I speak over this elbow today and say it's healed. Lord, touch it and bring it back to full health and full restoration. I want my full strength back. I'm believing for a total turnaround, in Jesus' mighty name. Amen.

That's not just for Sunday. That's Tuesday. That's what praying the names of God is for: knowing who He is every time you ask.



ABOUT

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Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, an author, and the creator of POWER 27. He has given more than 20 years to the local church and helps pastors and ministry leaders lead BIG.

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