Before You

BREAKTHROUGH

A Guided Devotional to prepare you for spiritual breakthrough & the testimony that follows

By:Paige Loehr

WELCOME

Before your Breakthrough is a guided journal that helps you dig into your story and chronicle the lessons of difficult dessert seasons

Although eventually this is going to be a full book that I will release, I wanted to have a portion of it ready for you!

If you are feeling like or hoping that you are on the verge of Breakthrough than allow this to help you write down some of what you have been through and what God has taught you along the way.

All of this is to prepare you to be able to share your testimony and the goodness of God with boldness and strength.

I hope you enjoy.

-Paige Loehr

This Current Season

Revelation 12:11
They triumphed over him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony.

In difficult seasons it is the world of God that has helped me to get through. When you are in those moments where nothing makes sense and everything is so bleak you have to remember the truth in God's word or the lies will take over. What you must know in this current season is that you will triumph by the blood of the lamb and by the word of your testimony. It is my belief that every season that we move out of it carries with it a testimony. To have a testimony you have to be present in the moment paying attention to all that God is doing, all that his blood is overcoming. Not just the big things but the little things as well.

Just like I mentioned in the introduction we are here to construct and build your testimony. What a powerful scripture to start off with and what better way to motivate you to actually get your pen out and write things down.

I have had many rough patches in life to work through. There were so many times when I was reaching for something, for anything that made sense. If I am being honest, scripture only helped sometimes because I was so uneducated and I was living outside of my true relationship with christ. I know, I know we do not need a middleman to connect us to our savior but man am I thankful for people who were able to put the things of God in layman's terms so that I could understand and so that I could actually be encouraged. So remember that your testimony carries immense power, that coupled with the blood of the lamb and there is truly nothing that can defeat you.

So as we prepare for what is to come, I want to know what this current season looks like for you. I wrote this because I felt like I was in a holding pattern with not many tools to feel like I was being productive to grow myself in the process. We are told to journal but sometimes we have no idea what to say. So I am going to help you get started.

What are you waiting for in this season?

What has been or is the hardest part of this waiting?

What do you feel that God has taught you on this journey so far?

What lessons do you feel you struggle with the most?

What do you believe to be true about God right now at this moment? (not what you hope to be true, what you actually believe)

PRAYER

Thank you Lord for being the overcomer that you are and teaching me to overcome as well. Thank you for being present in my current season and for all of the things that you are teaching me. Help me to see and hear the lessons that you are trying to convey, Jesus I don't want to miss a thing. Thank you for this book that is a Guide to building my story so that I am more prepared in my season of breakthrough to glorify you.

Write Your Own Prayer:

WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS

Psalms 126:5
Those who sow in tears, shall reap in Joy

I remember vividly writing these words down in my notebook. This was not some sarcastic remark, nor did it have a hopeful curvature that led to something more beautiful. It was agony to write those words because they were more true in that moment than they had ever been. I wrote down every single crazy thing that had been going on and I soaked the pages with my tears. I wasn't hopeful, I was hurting. And not just one dimensionally, there were so many layers to my pain. I felt discarded and profoundly wounded. None of what was going on could possibly become for my benefit.

I couldn't change the narrative at the time it just sucked. But still there was a seed bed of faith that still caused me to write it down. There were so many nuances that I listed. It was the many offenses that seemed to only add insult to injury. If some of these things were written alone were with no other accompanying issues then they were just the makings of a rough day that would end in binge eating ice cream and watching pride and prejudice to escape. But that's the problem, they were stacked on top of injuries that felt life threatening.

In the matter of months I lost the only men that had ever been in my life. My grandfather, who was my only father figure, passed away. In our faith we obviously believe that we will see him again but it is absolutely useless to tell your bleeding heart "this isn't goodbye", it never listens. I saw him almost daily towards the end. I wheeled him around in the garden at his retirement home. I listened as he remarked on how cool it was that God could put so many colors in the center of a flower. I picked up rocks that he pointed to and handed them to him. It was borderline impossible for him not to see beauty in all things. And then I slipped those rocks in my pockets and took them home. I still have the last collected rocks on the last walk with my grandfather.

I held his hand when life was gone but still warm and I could hear him singing unto the lord how great thou art. As much as I could rejoice in the fact that he was in the presence of God as he had longed to be, pain ripped through me at the thought of that separation. And losing him just further embedded the finality of my grandmother's death years before. With both of them now gone there were no pieces of them left to tough and feel but what they left within us and that just wasn't enough.

Then my brother, the other man who had always been there for me, was sentenced to spend some time in prison. This is where my heart for the under dog was just bleeding, because I wanted him to win, not succumb to the standards that world held so low for him. In this season I simply wanted my brother to learn from his past without having to suffer extreme consequences. But that wasn't the case. This was absolutely a temporary separation but years were too much. All that he would miss was too much.

I had to sit and watch as he walked away, knowing that he was no longer free and how I saw him and how he saw me for the next several years would be on someone else's terms. The brother whose shoulder I napped on in the bus riding home from school, the brother who had my back and calmed my anxious thoughts was not going to be there when my children were born. I didn't have a dad, my only father figure had just died and there my brother was being taken away from me.

It was too much. I wrote this down, I told God that I felt he was being overly confident in my strength and my ability to withstand. I reminded him that I had already been through so much trauma in my childhood and my teenage years. I thought for some reason that we were past seasons of extreme pain but this was actually worse. I told him that I didn't want to play this game any more and that I needed refuge.

These cries weren't the prelude to some hopeful ending. I concluded the journal entry in that place of truth.

WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS AND IT'S POURING

Stop the rain or give me a freaking umbrella, PLEASE!

Have you had a season where you felt like it was one thing after another?

If you have, can you remember enough to tell me about it? List it out and consider it an offering. This is how you make "casting your cares" an action and not just a statement.

When facing so much at once, what did you learn about yourself?

In the midst of Chaos What did you learn about God?

What were you most afraid of?

It is so important for you to know that God is not afraid of you in an unfiltered form. This exercise is not to whine and complain but to draw near to your father. If you have never felt the freedom to talk to God like he is the friend you call when you can't take it anymore and you need to get some things off your chest, then you are now being invited to a new place of intimacy. If you are married imagine your spouse never telling you what was on their mind, never letting you in and telling you they are struggling. How close would you feel to their heart. God wants ALL OF YOU

Prayer

I hear you when you say that when I sow these tears, that I will one day reap in Joy. Right now I am needing some of that joy. I need a glimpse of the Glory, I need a light at the end of the tunnel. I need a reminder, I need something to show me that if I keep going that it won't always hurt this bad. I need more than words. I need you to be more real than the rain right now. Cover me with your comfort and closeness like an umbrella and shield me from pain. You are my refuge and I need you now.

Write your own prayer

Burning Bush

Exodus 3:2
There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. 3 So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

There are so many passages in the bible that I could grab from in order to talk about signs and confirmations. There is something about the story of Moses though, it is the whole setting the captives free mission that I can relate to so well.
And I chose this scripture because one of my very favorite parts of the season of waiting is all of the signs and the confirmations that you receive from God. So as much as I want to dive into the whole story of where you are at right now. I would be remiss if I didn't ask you to reflect on all of the promises. All of the times when you felt the most weak, the most insecure, the weariest and you got a text, or the verse of the day spoke to your soul.
This is the kindness of God, showing up on your behalf, this is God himself orchestrating a moment for you to remember who you are and whose you are. This is God telling you that he has not forgotten you and he has no intentions of letting you down.
This was one of my biggest motivations to write this devotional book. I have had so many moments like this with God. My husband actually jokes and says you need to cry out more often, because he likes to answer you immediately. If you feel that maybe you don't have a ton of examples of this, then I must encourage you to be more vulnerable with your father. It doesn't anger me when my children cry out to me. It motivates me to make sure that they are affirmed, to ensure that they know I am there and I have them.
He is a good Father and he wants to hear from you.
He also wants to show up in the middle of the story of your life and speak even if maybe you were not seeking that. Even if you were actually running away from everything you once knew.
Or you could be like me who makes a habit out of whining to God for answers because you are actively pursuing his voice and will in your life.
I am sure you have some stories of when you felt a shift, a calling or just simple reminders. These moments are important because if you can recall them and tell them well, then you teach others to begin looking for the million different miracles around them happening each day. You will not only temporarily encourage them, but you will teach them to look for those signs themselves.
And if you are like me and you constantly beg for affirmation, well you have a thousand of these stories, maybe it won't all fit here, so let me encourage you to make sure that you begin the process of writing these encounters down. No matter how big or small, the fact is that God is speaking to you constantly, let's see if you have been listening.

Ok, so it may not have been a burning bush moment, but tell me about some times when you felt the lord showing up in your life and even speaking to you.

Tell me about a few times that you have noticed little signs that affirmed you.

Tell me about a few times when you have asked for confirmation and the lord delivered.

What is the burning bush that you are in need of in this season, What signs are you currently asking for ?

Prayer

Lord, you are beyond kind to us. As we look at the past and the moments that have gotten us to today standing on the verge of breakthrough we just thank you. We slow down in this moment and set aside the desire to soar and we revell in your goodness. The times when you have set us apart, the times when you spoke so clearly, the times when you were the peaceful presence that we needed. You are above all else, just so good. And as I stand on the verge of all the promises, I can say you are really the only thing that matters. Thank you.

Write your own prayer...

PARTING THE SEA:

EXODUS 14:21

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land.The waters were divided

The parting of the red sea has to be one of the most significant miracles in the bible. I think I place it in that category mainly because of the amount of people that witnessed it, the amount of people that benefited from it and the amount of "enemies"who were also affected by it. I have seen it play out in so many movies but in one of the newer adaptations with cgi, they made it look very realistic and even showed a whale swimming by encased by this giant wall of water. Can you imagine that?The majesty, the magnitude of this mighty move of God.

The crazy thing is, that the Israelites seemed to have forgotten this miracle. It wasn't long before they began to complain. Sometimes I think the complaints were more based on the fact that they expected God to work miracles on their beck and call. They wanted him to be a genie, rather than the king of kings.

You can fall on either side of this. You can either be too hung up on the miracles of the past that you expect God to either do the same thing or you are whining and waiting for him to do something better. You continuously look to the past with the"those were the good ole days" mentality and that no doubt affects your expectation for the future.

Or you may fall in the category of the ones that have seemingly had forgotten the miracles of the past. Maybe not always but often you operate almost as if God has never done anything for you. When you live in this place for too long you actually begin to crave the yoke of slavery because you remember the ease of being owned. At the end of the day it's not easy to be a slave to sin, but it is easier to be on autopilot and not have to think through and grow through the season of waiting.

The Israelites that craved the meat of Egypt were forgetting the good things that God has done, as well as the horrible consequence of living in bondage. Their amnesia had them looking back. So here we are both constantly looking back. To the good, to the bad, to the ugly. In so many moments, even in this devotional I am going to ask you to look back. I am a huge believer in story work and understanding your story of origin. But when I ask you to look back it is with intention, these Israelites were dwelling on the past and in neither case was it helping them to step forward into the life that God has for them. Let's not be like them, so let's look back intentionally. Let's cut off the unhealthy craving for past lifestyles, let's put the trophies of the past on the shelf once and for all and set our sights on the road ahead.

Do you find yourself looking back a lot?

Do you ever begin to crave any parts of the lifestyle that you have separated yourself from? If so, why?

Are you currently fixating on a miracle of the past and asking God for an encore?

Tell me about some major miracles God has done in your life.

Are you longing for seasons past or are you in hopeful expectation for what God is going to do in the future?

What do you need to leave here? Do you need to repent for being forgetful of all he has done or do you need forgiveness for trying to keep him in the box of the miracles of the past.

Prayer

We have a strong desire to move forward, to step out of the stagnant place that we have been and boldly walk into the land we have been promised. We long to see the declarations of our life fulfilled. So right now we release the pull to constantly look back. We have never and will never forget what you have done and the mighty ways you work, but we will no longer allow those memories to keep us stuck. We release the memory of that yoke of slavery and we release the expectation of what you have done before. Give us fresh eyes lord, give us a renewed mind and give us clear vision for where you intend for us to go. I trust that your plan is greater than my memory of the past and what was once. We long to see you do a new thing Jesus.