

God Can Turn Trials Into Blessings

Are you facing trials that make you question, why me, Lord? Those trials could be relationship difficulties, financial struggles and personal challenges. They can sometimes leave you questioning God's plan for your life. No one chooses to go through trials, and have a "threshing-floor experience," it comes upon you—as a surprise.

In Judges 6, Gideon is on a threshing floor, threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. The Midianites had been cruel to the Israelites, they burned their harvest, assaulted their women and killed their people. Because of this, Gideon was hidden away, grinding out the grain. The angel of the Lord came to him saying, "Gideon, the Lord is with you, you mighty warrior." Gideon responded, "But if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? . . . But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

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Gideon is saying, where is the Lord? Isn't that exactly what we say when we're going through difficulties? When you're having a threshing-floor experience you may experience a feeling of abandonment and you may be in a season of questioning God.

In response, God said to Gideon, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?" In effect, God was saying, am I not on the threshing

floor with you?"

When you're on the threshing floor, God is there with you. He doesn't desert you.

Gideon continued his dialogue with God saying, "But how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." In today's language, Gideon was saying, don't you know who I am? I can't handle this. I'm not made to handle this, my emotions can't handle it, my background didn't prepare me. God, I can't take this.

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When you're on the threshing floor, you may also say, why is this happening to me? Where is the Lord? He has abandoned me. I can't take it.

The Lord answered Gideon, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive." Gideon responded, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me." Isn't that like something you'd say to God when going through a tough time? But God, in His mercy, will give you a sign because threshing floors are God's opportunities with us.

Back to Gideon—he offered a sacrifice and the angel touched it and fire flared and consumed the meat and bread. Then God told Gideon to tear down the altar to Baal.

While on the threshing floor, you may have to pull down some of your own altars. Maybe it's things you've said you'd never do, that you've been doing. There may be things you've said you'd never do that God wants you to do. There may be false altars in your life that God wants you to tear down. It may be false pride that God wants you to tear down. You may have a big idea, but trust that God has a bigger idea for you.

Gideon pulled down those altars to Baal, and then went through some time of questioning God. Eventually, God used Gideon to be a deliverer.

What was God doing with Gideon on the threshing floor? He was making Gideon a deliverer. And that's what God will do with you on your threshing floor—make you a deliverer. The threshing floor is where your ministry is made because that's where God changes you and gets rid of the chaff (false altars). It's where He checks out your motive to make sure you're really in it for the Lord. God wants to know if you're willing to follow Him and do what He tells you to do—or are you trying to be the big name? The threshing floor is important for ministry, and all of us have a ministry.

Don't despise threshing-floor experiences. Your struggles are not in vain, but are an essential process God uses to refine, strengthen and prepare you for His greater purpose and to step into the identity He calls you into.

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Marilyn Hickey founded Marilyn Hickey Ministries more than 45 years ago with God's vision to cover the earth with the Word. Marilyn co-hosts a daily television program, "Today with Marilyn & Sarah," reaching a potential viewing audience of over 2 billion households worldwide. Marilyn communicates deep biblical truths in a way that is understandable and practical for everyday life.

Sarah Bowling is on a mission to connect every one with the heart of God while loving those who are overlooked, excluded, and ignored. Led by Holy Spirit and anchored in the Word, Sarah seeks to inspire all to know the unconditional and transformational love of God in our daily lives. A Bible teacher, author, international speaker, and a global

humanitarian, Sarah also co-hosts a daily television program, "Today with Marilyn & Sarah."

Isabell Bowling's passion is to help people have a transformative experience with the power of God. She brings a fresh anointing of the presence and fire of God wherever she goes. Her faith and ministry was shaped by observation and prayer, watching the Lord work in and through her grandmother, Marilyn Hickey, and her mom, Sarah Bowling. After graduating from Oral Roberts University in 2023, Isabell joined the Marilyn & Sarah Ministries team where she stepped into a powerful teaching ministry with her family.