

When You Don't See an End to Your Trials

Have you ever asked God why? "Why me, Lord?" "Why not pick somebody else for this?" "Why am I always the one going through the fire?"

In the good times we say, "Lord, I love You." We quote, "Oh, in the volume of the book it is written of me I delight to do Your will, O Lord." Then we add, "Father take me, mold me, use me. Take my life, and let it be consecrated to Thee."

We say all this *until* God asks us to do something or we go through something that is *very* uncomfortable—something we have never done or experienced before.

Then we start singing a different tune. "I've never passed this way before, Lord. It's dark, and I'm not sure where I'm going. I can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. You're making me step into the unknown.

"Yes, I know You are holding my hand. I know You are more concerned about me than the many sparrows You so carefully watch over. I know you have numbered the very hairs on my head. I know You will never leave me or forsake me. But Lord, I don't know about *this*!

"This doesn't make any sense. This goes beyond my ability to understand. Why are You doing this, Lord? I'm going to trust You in it, but I don't understand it. I can't do this by myself. Carry me, Lord. Let me know You are with me in it."

We have all experienced those times when our world falls apart. Nothing is working out, as it should. We receive awesome prophetic words about future ministry, husbands, families, wealth—and get so excited. But just when everything seems to be going well, the bottom falls out. Our entire world

is shaken.

The difficulties come in many forms: Perhaps you are lied about in ministry or your husband has an affair with a best friend or a family member is diagnosed with cancer. It could be you are trapped in a bad relationship. Maybe you are facing eviction or you've lost your job. Perhaps you are so sick you want to die.

During times like this, have you been tempted to ask, "Why me, Lord?"

I'm sure Joseph must have been. He knew his destiny was to rule—but he found himself at the bottom of a pit, discarded by his own brothers. Later, just when it appeared he was beginning to walk in purpose, he was consigned to prison—for rightly fleeing from his master's wife when she tried to seduce him!

Do you think Joseph might have asked, "Why me, Lord?" and "Where are You in all this?" But God had a greater purpose. He was preparing Joseph to save two nations.

We tend to see our circumstances through our natural eyes. We live in time and space, so we live in today. But God sees eternity. He sees the end from the beginning. He knows the outcome already. And He knows the plans He has for us—plans to prosper us and not harm us, plans to give us hope and a future (Jer. 29:11).

Those who stood at the foot of the cross at Calvary and watched Jesus die lived in agony for a time. Perhaps they asked, "Why, Lord?" when they heard Him cry out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Though Jesus had prophesied His own resurrection, the people did not understand and could not anticipate the eventual glorious outcome of this terrible scene.

But we know that God had a greater purpose for Jesus—to save

the lost and to reproduce Himself in a new creation called the sons of God, who would be joint heirs with Him in God's kingdom.

Not too long ago, the Lord allowed me to go through some intense spiritual warfare that caused me to question Him. In the process, He did a deep work within me, and when I asked, "Why, Lord?" His response was simple: "For the greater purpose."

Perhaps you are going through something you don't understand. You are bombarded on every side with doubts, fears and uncertainties. Know that you can trust God in and through your circumstances. Believe that He has a plan for you and that the end result will be good.

Even more important, know that there is a higher purpose you can't see yet—one that may include your being the means of salvation for someone else. Just as Joseph was used to save two nations and Jesus to bring salvation to the world, so the Lord will use you for His greater purpose.

You may not be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel, but you know the One who is holding that light. Are you willing to trust Him to lead you through? He will turn your trial around for your good—and answer your cry by pointing to the fulfillment of His plans.

Prayer Power for the Week of Nov. 13, 2016

This week tell the Lord that you trust Him in the midst of your circumstances and will continue to praise Him no matter what it looks like. Thank Him that He knows the end from the beginning and that the plans He has for you are good ones. Ask Him to help you align your faith to His promises and give you a song that magnifies Him in your heart. Ask God to lead you to the Scriptures you can declare over your situation. Continue to pray for the nation to experience revival and for righteousness to be established in our midst. In the aftermath

of the recent elections, pray for a smooth transition, healing and unity to work toward our national good, and protection for our elected officials, cities, borders and citizens (Jer. 29:11; Rom 8:28; 1 Tim. 2:1-3; 2 Chr. 7:14). {eoa}