

Published based on [Mercies in Disguise: Finding God in Your Trials](#)

Mercies in Disguise: Finding God in Your Trials



Seasons of trials and troubles, pain and suffering, disappointments and dying dreams can leave all of us with more questions than answers. We find ourselves unable to box our theological answers as neatly as before. We wrestle with questions like, "Where are you, God?" "Why have you deserted me?" "Are you real, God?" In our trials, we reach for our false strengths and we find that they were only illusions.

My greatest trials thus far lie just behind me. I can still see them in the rear view mirror. And yet, I move forward looking unto the road before me.

As Laura Story so beautifully sings in her song, Blessings, I have found blessings in the raindrops, healing in the tears, God's presence in my sleepless nights. Somehow, in the ways that only God can, my trials have brought me God's mercies in disguise.

I don't like it. In fact, I hate it, this process where God allows us to be stripped of our defenses and our facades. I hate the process and cherish the result.

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And...the man touched the hollow of his thigh. Genesis 32:24-25

God met Jacob when he was alone. All of Jacob's assets were of no good to him when he met God one on one. There was no one or no thing for Jacob to rely on that night. And maybe for the first time in his life, he didn't run. He stayed, he wrestled. And God blessed him by wounding him.

Forevermore Jacob had a change of identity. He would no longer be identified with his false identity. He would now be, "Israel", He had stayed in the battle and not run away. He had prevailed.

He was now marked by his encounter, his wounding.

For Jacob, now Israel, the wound would forever be with him to remind him that he had encountered God. He was blessed. He was forgiven. He had found his true identity and could leave his past behind...except for that limp.

He could never take a step without his limp.

God's strength would be shown in Jacob's weakness.

Our God encounters have a way of showing us the eternal perspective of all we use to give us value in false ways. Whether money or beauty or influence, it can all be lost in an instant and suddenly one finds that the only things of value in this world is that which has been touched by God.

Our most transforming wrestling matches are between our own fleshly strengths and God's supernatural strength. We will always lose, and yet, in losing, we win.

We become marked and there is no shame in the limp because it anchors us to the true hope we can only find in God.

Take a moment and listen to Laura's song and ask yourself if there are blessings in your raindrops, healing in your tears, the nearness of God in your sleepless nights, and God's mercy disguised in your trials.

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