

A close-up photograph of a pile of gold nuggets of various sizes and shapes, resting on a dark, textured surface. The nuggets have a bright yellow-gold color with some darker, more metallic-looking areas. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures and facets of the gold.

Coming Forth  
As Gold

**Suffering** - you may face questions like:

- ▶ If God really was a God of love there would be no suffering.
- ▶ Why do bad things happen to good people?
- ▶ Why is there so much increasing pain in the world today?

## Genesis 1:31 (Amplified)

And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good (suitable, pleasant) and He approved it completely. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

## Genesis 2:16-17

16. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying,  
You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,  
17. but of the tree of the knowledge of good and  
evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat  
of it you shall surely die.

**Human suffering exists because sin exists.**

The outcome, the impact of this sin, is recorded in **Genesis 3:14-19.**

## **Sin affects us all to this very day:**

- ▶ Our relationship with God
- ▶ Our relationships with each other, and even with animals
- ▶ the ground became cursed (Romans 8:20-21)
- ▶ increased pain in childbearing
- ▶ blood, sweat and tears in labour intensive work
- ▶ contentiousness in human relationships

Ultimately, sin results in physical death and sin opens the door for all kinds of ongoing suffering throughout all of creation.

## Genesis 6:6-8

6. And the LORD regretted that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him to His heart.
7. So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them."
8. But Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD.

- ▶ God knew that suffering would exist in the world as a result of our own stubborn pride and wilful self-determination!
- ▶ God made redemption possible.
- ▶ God's ultimate plan was for the Son of God (Jesus Christ) to take on human flesh, live a human life complete with all the suffering of a fallen world.
- ▶ God knew that His precious only Son would be crucified though He had not sinned, and that He'd rise again to life, having defeated sin and death.
- ▶ All who put their wholehearted faith in Jesus and turn from their sin will be saved.
- ▶ God's gift of grace to us cost Him greatly.

## Isaiah 52:14 (Amplified)

For many the Servant of God became an object of horror; many were astonished at Him. His face and His whole appearance were marred more than any man's, and His form beyond that of the sons of men—but just as many were astonished at Him.

## **Romans 8:28**

And we know that for those who love God  
all things work together for good, for those  
who are called according to His purpose.

God causes suffering as a **judgment against the wicked** or as a **call to the wicked to repent**.

God allows suffering by **giving people over to their sins**.

### Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God uses suffering to **train His children**  
and to **refine** or **test our faith**.

### Hebrews 12:11

For the moment all discipline seems  
painful rather than pleasant, but later it  
yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness  
to those who have been trained by it.

- ▶ We can and should **examine our lives** and ask God to reveal any sinful tendencies He is ridding us of. Repent and seek to put those sins to death.
- ▶ If there's **no sin associated with our suffering**, God will still use it in our lives to draw us closer to Him and to deepen our faith.

### Psalm 43:5

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God.

## 1 Peter 5:6-10

6. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you,
7. casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.
8. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
9. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.
10. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

### **John 9:3**

Neither this man nor his parents sinned,  
said Jesus, but this happened so that the  
works of God might be displayed in him.

## 2 Corinthians 12:9

...My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.  
(Paul responded) Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

Sometimes it takes suffering to reveal to our hearts our view of God.

## Hebrews 4:15-16

15. For we do not have a high priest [Jesus] who is unable to empathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet He did not sin.
16. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

## 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

16. Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.
17. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.
18. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

## The Lord God Almighty is SOVEREIGN!

That means no matter how much suffering we endure, He has not relinquished control over His creation. If He were helpless to stop suffering, He would not be God. If He instigated evil, He would not be good. But when a good and sovereign God causes/allows people to suffer, it is for their eternal benefit and His eternal glory.

Those who know Him can live in confidence that, no matter how difficult the journey, the moment we see Him face-to-face our eyes will be opened and we will exclaim, "Now I understand why I went through that! Of course! Thank you, Father. It was the only right thing to do!"

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1. The good news is that God did not leave us here to suffer pointlessly, because God WILL redeem that suffering.

## **John 16:33** (Amplified)

I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]

1. The good news is that God did not leave us here to suffer pointlessly, because God WILL redeem that suffering.
2. Those with faith in Jesus, will not be crushed by suffering but will come through the trial with their faith intact.

## 1 Peter 1:6-7

6. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,
7. so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1. The good news is that God did not leave us here to suffer pointlessly, because God WILL redeem that suffering.
2. Those with faith in Jesus, will not be crushed by suffering but will come through the trial with their faith intact.
3. The faithful do not shake their fists at God or question His goodness.

## James 1:2-4 & 12

2. Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,
  3. for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.
  4. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
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12. Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

1. The good news is that God did not leave us here to suffer pointlessly, because God WILL redeem that suffering.
2. Those with faith in Jesus, will not be crushed by suffering but will come through the trial with their faith intact.
3. The faithful do not shake their fists at God or question His goodness.
4. The Word of God encourages us to take our eyes off this world and turn them to eternity.

## Hebrews 12:1-2

1. Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
2. fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

## **Romans 8:18** (Amplified)

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time (this present life) are not worth being compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us and in us and for us and conferred on us!

## Romans 5:3-5

3. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,
4. and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,
5. and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Gold and silver are refined in the fiery furnace in a repeated process:

**Job 23:10-11**

10. But He knows the way that I take; when He has tried me, I shall come out as gold.
11. My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and have not turned aside.

**When He has tried me, tested and proven me repeatedly! I shall come forth as gold.**

What an absolute privilege to be tested, tried, trained, challenged and suffer for the purpose of being made into His image and likeness to be used by Him for His glory in these days!