



testimony

come  
forth as  
**gold**

**Ceri Fishwick** shares the lessons she's learnt from her father's life and death

Whilst creating a personal tribute to my father, I found myself reflecting on his prayer life. As my father weakened during the last weeks of his life, ever consistent in prayers for his family and others, he attempted to whisper encouragements and reassurances of his love to each of us, with individual thanks to both family and carers alike.

My father's final whispers were to quote Psalm 31, a reminder that our times are in God's hands. It was no mean feat, living 40 years wheelchair-bound and with multiple co-morbidities. My father's life was characterised by prayer, hard work, and self-discipline, without complaint over his sufferings. I naturally questioned the justice of this physical state for a man who had lived to God's glory, was used of God for his purpose and spiritually blessed by him. I now see this as an audacity, questioning God's will, with reflection on how 'spiritual dew' rested on so many viewing his Christian witness.

Philippians 1:12-13 reminds us that Christian suffering is for the furtherance of the gospel, while 1 Timothy 1:16 shows how believers should respond to long suffering as an example to others who *'hereafter believe on him to life everlasting'* (KJV).

Being drawn to Job we learn how he lost all his property, faced the destruction of his herds and servants, the loss of his sons in their youth, and was himself struck down by boils.

Although Job's wife instructed him to curse God, it is recorded that Job did not sin nor accuse the Lord foolishly. Throughout the passage we can see how God broke Job's selfish spirit, and began a work in his life and the divine motive was realised by Job when he learned God knew all about him. Job had been tried, tested and stated, *'I shall come forth as gold'*. (Job 23:10, KJV) We can see his hardened heart softened by the grace and purposes of the Lord.

When employed as a Nurse Case Manager, managing long term conditions for housebound patients, I became burdened in prayer for those living within a silent world, often lonely, without faith and hope in Christ. God provides sovereign care for his people as he did for my father and as we read in Job.

He whispers reassurances to us, with the comfort of knowing that he is with us in this world and in the next. In a world when the spiritual pulse can be so faint, we can trust in him, his purposes and justice. 🌸

**Ceri Fishwick** is a retired nurse case manager