

# Job 23:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

## Analysis

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**But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.** Job expresses confident faith despite his suffering. "He knoweth" (yada, יָדָע) indicates intimate, comprehensive knowledge—God fully understands Job's path and circumstances. "The way that I take" (derek immadi, דֶּרֶךְ עִמָּדִי) literally means "the way with me" or "my way"—God knows Job's conduct, choices, and the path of his life.

The second clause employs metallurgical imagery: "when he hath tried me" uses bachan (בָּחַן), meaning to test, examine, or refine. This verb often describes assaying precious metals to verify purity. "I shall come forth as gold" (kazahav etse, כִּזְהָב אֵצֶה) uses a comparison—"like gold I will emerge." Gold refined by fire has impurities removed, revealing pure metal. Job trusts that his suffering serves as refining fire that will ultimately vindicate his character.

This verse articulates the theology of redemptive suffering. Testing doesn't create righteousness but reveals and refines it, removing dross while preserving genuine faith. The imagery appears throughout Scripture: Psalm 66:10, Proverbs 17:3, Isaiah 48:10, Zechariah 13:9, Malachi 3:2-3, and especially 1 Peter 1:6-7, which explicitly connects trials to gold refined by fire, resulting in praise, glory, and honor at Christ's revelation. Job's confidence anticipates the New Testament teaching that suffering produces perseverance, character, and hope (Romans 5:3-5).

## Historical Context

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Job 23 appears late in the dialogues, after Job has endured repeated accusations from his three friends. Despite his anguish and God's seeming absence (23:3-9), Job maintains confidence in his integrity and God's ultimate vindication. The metallurgical imagery would resonate powerfully with ancient audiences familiar with gold refining processes.

Ancient refiners used fire to melt gold, causing impurities (dross) to rise to the surface where they could be skimmed off, leaving pure metal. This labor-intensive process required multiple firings to achieve high purity. The metaphor's power lies in recognizing that fire doesn't create gold but reveals and purifies what exists, removing contamination.

Job's trust that testing will vindicate him reflects mature faith that understands suffering's potential redemptive purposes. While the book rejects simplistic retribution theology (suffering always punishes sin), it affirms that God can use trials redemptively. The New Testament develops this theme extensively, teaching that suffering refines faith, produces Christlike character, and prepares believers for glory (2 Corinthians 4:16-18, James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 4:12-13).

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does Job's confidence that God knows his way provide comfort when facing unexplained trials?
2. What does the metaphor of gold refined by fire teach about suffering's potential redemptive purposes?
3. How can we distinguish between suffering that refines faith and suffering that should be resisted or avoided?

4. In what ways has your own faith been tested and refined through difficult circumstances?
5. How does Job's example challenge the assumption that strong faith prevents suffering or guarantees immediate vindication?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי	יָדַע	דֶּרֶךְ	עֲמַד י	בְּחִנּוּי	כַּזָּהָב
H3588	<b>But he knoweth</b>	<b>the way</b>	<b>that I take</b>	<b>when he hath tried</b>	<b>as gold</b>
	H3045	H1870	H5978	H974	H2091
אֲנִי־אֵצֶקֶ					
<b>me I shall come forth</b>					
H3318					

## Additional Cross-References

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**James 1:12** (Parallel theme): Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

**1 Peter 1:7** (Parallel theme): That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

**Psalms 66:10** (Parallel theme): For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

**Zechariah 13:9** (Parallel theme): And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

**Psalms 17:3** (Parallel theme): Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

**Hebrews 11:17** (Parallel theme): By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

**Proverbs 17:3** (Parallel theme): The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

**Psalms 1:6** (Parallel theme): For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

**John 21:17** (Parallel theme): He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

**Deuteronomy 8:2** (Parallel theme): And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.