



Scripture Nugget - Hearing the voice of God amidst noise and distraction

You have also forgotten the exhortation addressed to you as sons: "My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reprovved by Him; for whom the Lord loves, He disciplines; He scourges every son He acknowledges." Endure your trials as "discipline"; God treats you as sons. For what "son" is there whom his father does not discipline? (Hebrews 12:5-7).

God speaks mightily to us through our sufferings. God can do all things but He will not force His salvation on us even though the greatest desire of His heart is that every child of His gains eternal life won for us by the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. Instead, He gently knocks on the door of our heart, and competes for our love, time and attention with all the things and people we surround ourselves with. He speaks to us in many ways as only God can. God likes to speak to us through His Word. Thus, we need to meditate and study Scripture on a daily basis. God tells us His Word is a lamp for our feet, a light for our path (cf. Psalm 119:105). In response to the tricky questioning of the Sadducees, Jesus said: *"You are misled because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God."* (Matthew 22:29). We will be misled if we are ignorant of or fail to understand Scripture. God speaks to us in our heart and mind especially during prayer through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Thus, St Paul tells us to pray unceasingly (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:17). God uses people around us, situations and happenings to convey His message to us. If all the usual methods fail, God lifts up His rod, and allows trials, tribulations and suffering to come our way. *Which do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a gentle spirit? (1 Corinthians 4:21).*

Our sufferings are a solid proof that God loves us. *For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? (Hebrews 12:7).* God achieves many things in us through the sufferings He sent us. He gets our attention. Sensing our desperate need for mighty help that only the Most High can provide, we cry out to the Lord in distress. *The righteous cry out, the Lord hears and He rescues them from all their afflictions. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted, saves those whose spirit is crushed (Psalm 34:18-19).* Thus, the Lord breaks unhealthy bondages to earthly things that usurp the attention, love and time of His children, which should be directed to the Lord. Likened to the unfaithful but cherished wife of Prophet Hosea, we are led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness of our heart where God can gain our sole attention and speak tender words heart to heart to us. In our sufferings, many trivial cares and concerns simply fall away. God conquers our pride, the Spirit helps us reevaluate our priorities and see things from God's eternal perspective. Some people are converted to the Lord only after serious illnesses and sufferings before they passed from this earthly life. We should keep our heart and mind attuned to the Lord without the rod.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, I must no longer continue to live in my old ways in the futility of mind, darkened understanding and alienated from the life of God because of my ignorance and hardness of heart (cf. Ephesians 4:17-18). Instead, I consecrate my mind and heart to You. Please renew me in righteousness and holiness of truth (cf. Ephesians 4:23-24). Thus, help me recognize and accept Your loving will for my life so that I may walk daily on Your true path to my glorious destiny. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.