

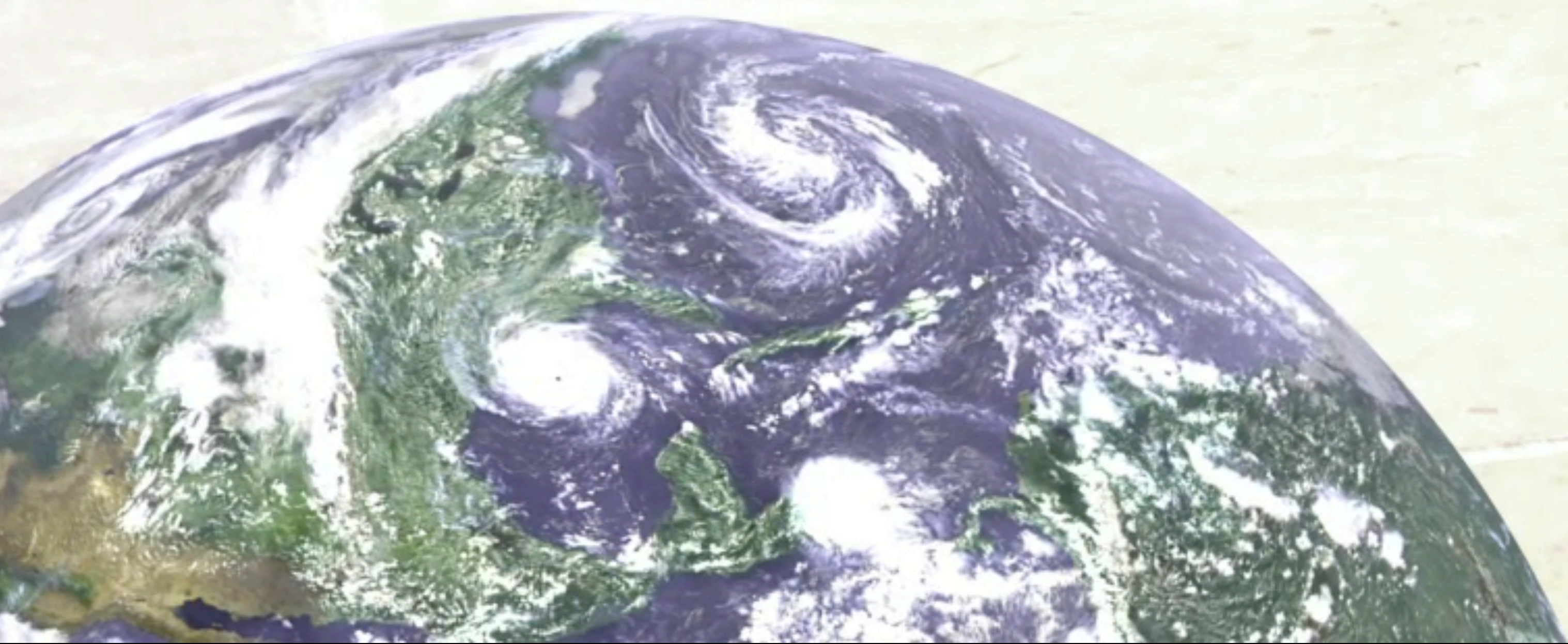


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Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love
and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies
the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

P S A L M 1 0 7 : 8 - 9

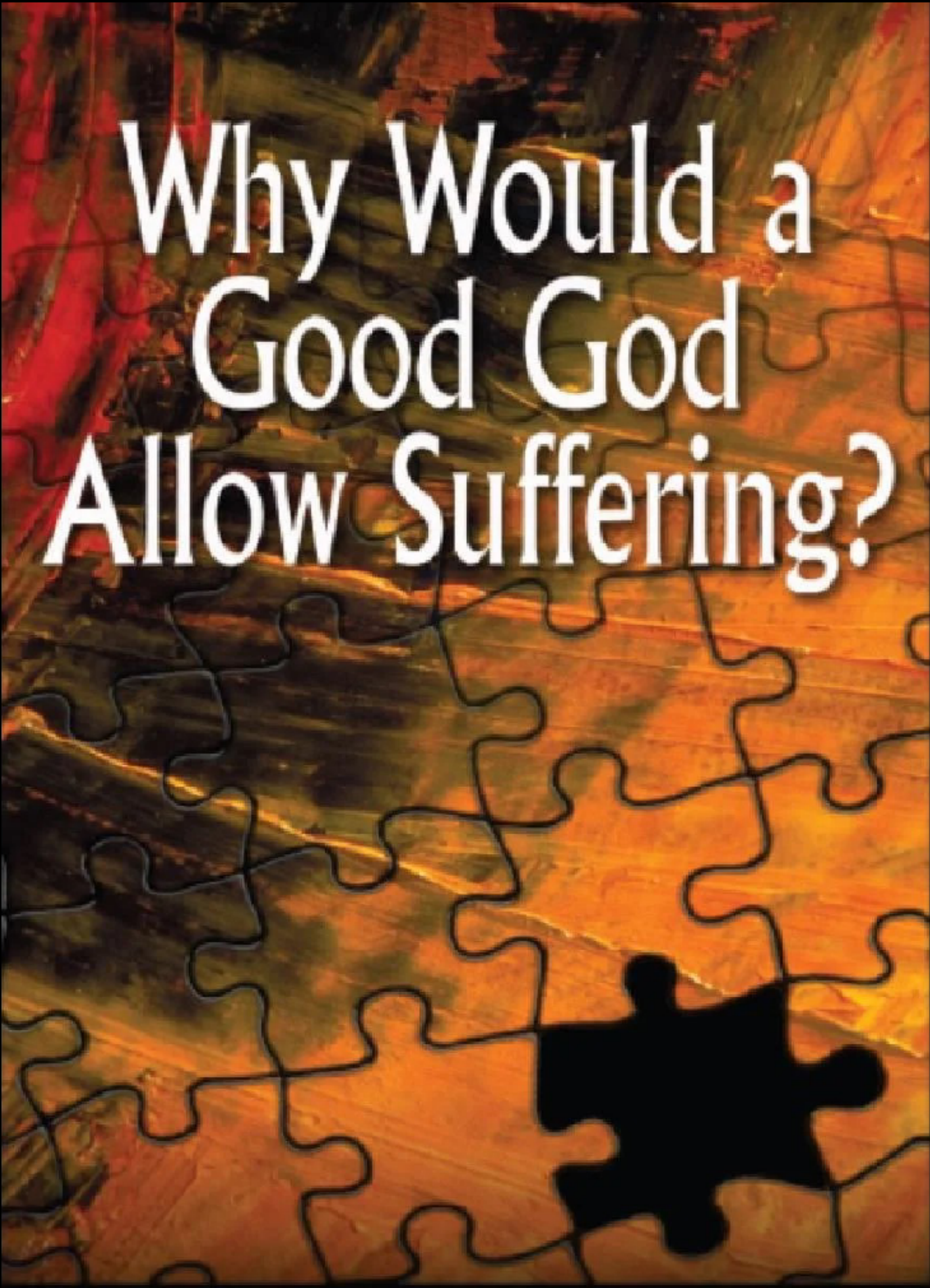
**THANK
HIM** FOR
YOUR **FEET.**



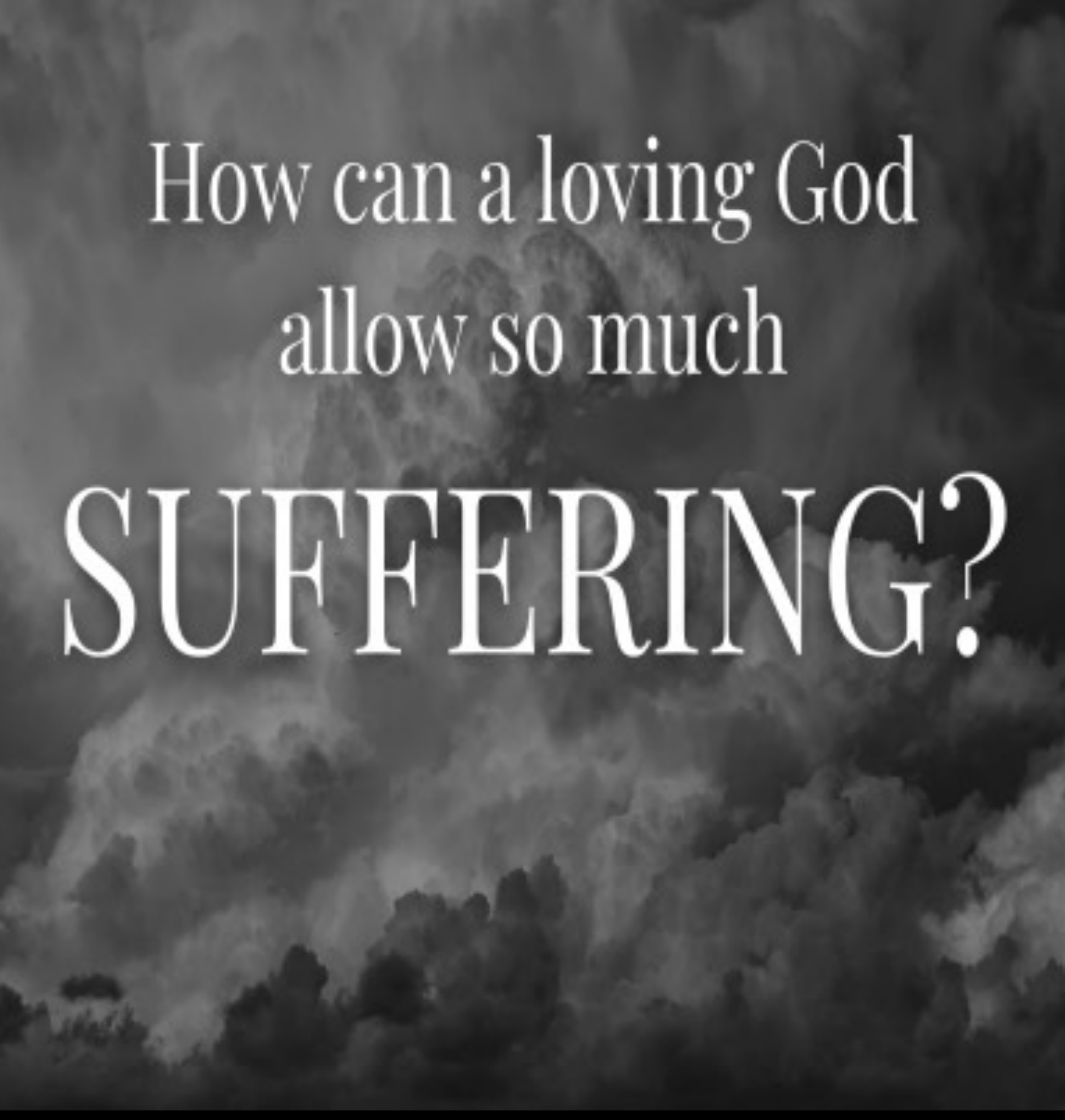
“BELOVED, BROKEN AND BEAUTIFUL”
Wrestling with Life’s Realities in a Broken World
- October 8th 2023 -







Why Would a
Good God
Allow Suffering?



How can a loving God
allow so much
SUFFERING?

**WHY DOES GOD ALLOW EVIL AND
SUFFERING TO EXIST?**



“Psalm 46:8-11”

“Attention, all! See the marvels of God!
He plants flowers and trees all over the earth,
Bans war from pole to pole, breaks
all the weapons across his knee.

“Step out of the traffic! Take a long,
loving look at me, your High God,
above politics, above everything.”

Jacob-wrestling God fights for us,
God-of-Angel-Armies protects us.

- THE MESSAGE

Come, see the glorious works
of the Lord: See how he brings
destruction upon the world.

He causes wars to end throughout the earth.
He breaks the bow and snaps the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

“Be still, and know that I am God!
I will be honored by every nation.
I will be honored throughout the world.”

The Lord of Heaven’s Armies is here
among us; the God of Israel is our fortress.

- NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

OF THE INCREASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND PEACE
THERE WILL BE NO END,
UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID AND OVER HIS KINGDOM,
TO ORDER IT AND ESTABLISH IT
WITH JUDGMENT AND JUSTICE
FROM THAT TIME FORWARD, EVEN FOREVER.
**THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF
HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS.**

ISAIAH 9:7



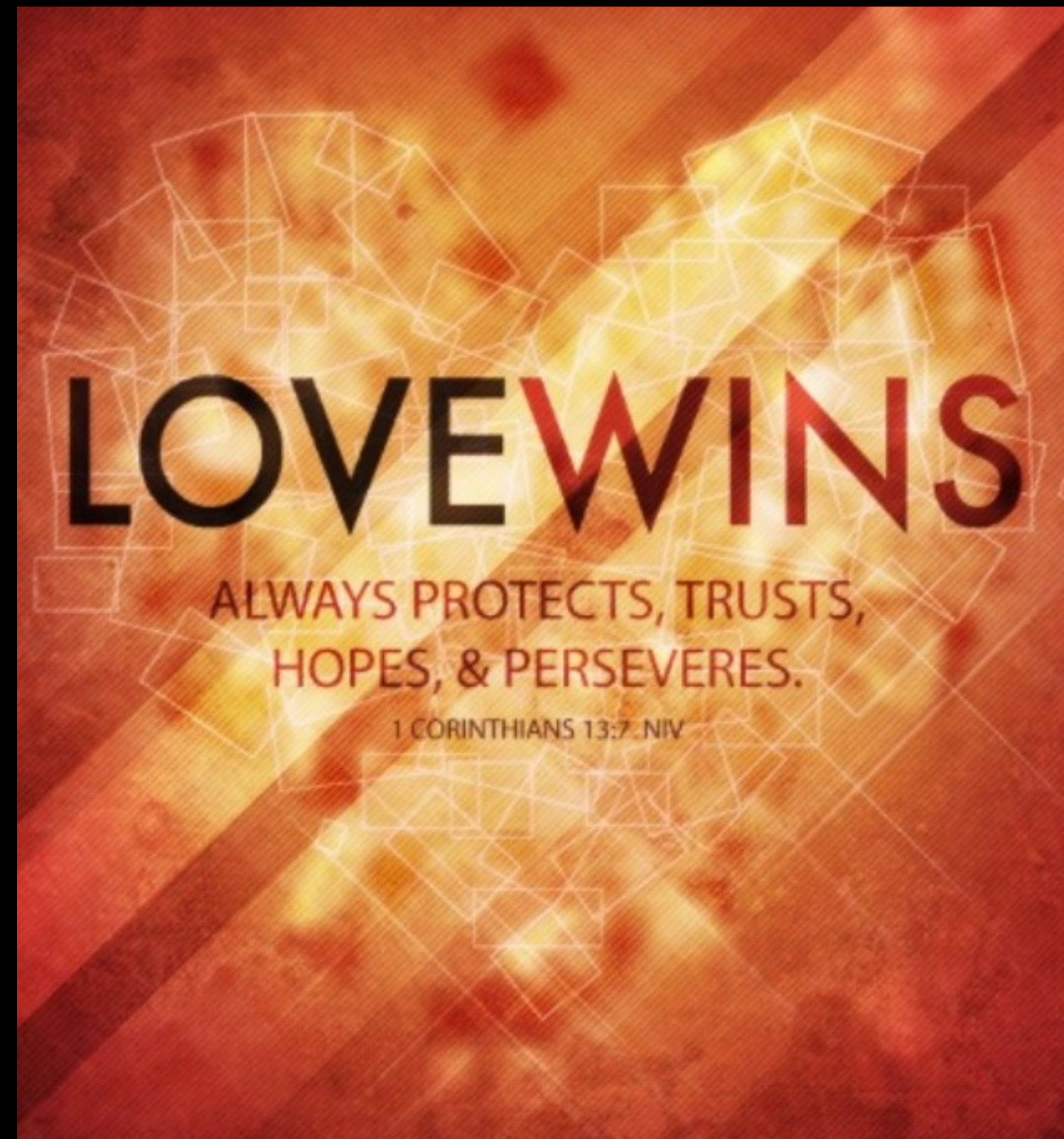
GOD'S LOVE WINS

Does it REALLY?

If God's *Love Wins*, what might 'winning' look like?
What's required of us?

Why does winning Jesus' way take so long?

How does one move from merely spectating to willingly participating in God's recreative Love?



The Uncontrolling Love of God

“The model of God as essentially kenotic (i.e. self-giving, unending love poured out) says God’s eternal nature is uncontrolling love. Because of love, God necessarily provides freedom/agency to creatures, and God works by empowering and inspiring creation toward well-being. God also necessarily upholds the regularities (i.e. dynamics) of the universe because those regularities derive from God’s eternal nature of love.”

— Thomas Jay Oord
“THE UNCONTROLLING LOVE OF GOD”



THIS
IS HOW
LOVE
WINS...

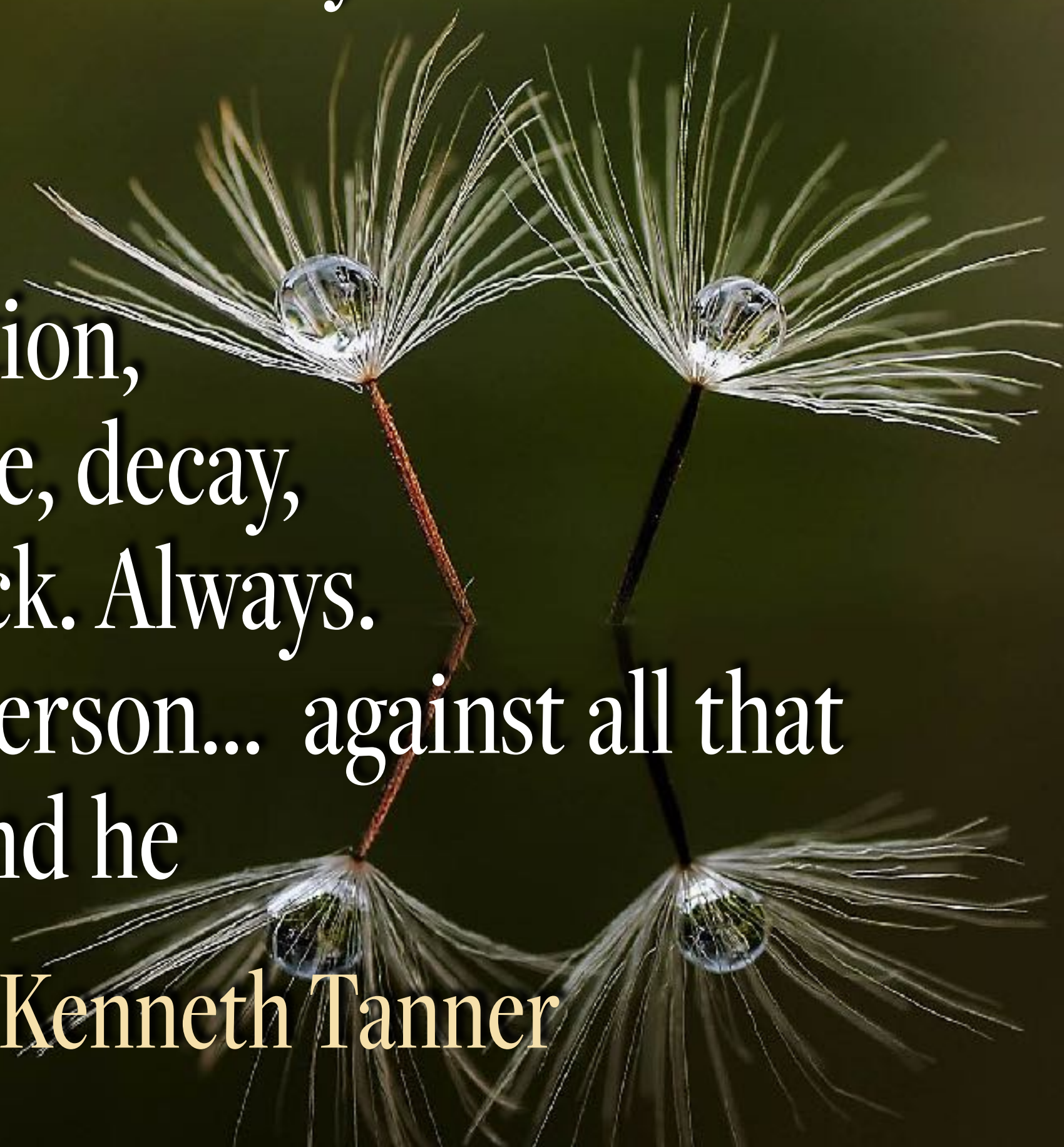
“Make Jesus Scandalous Again”

(by Brad Jersak from
“IN: Incarnation and Inclusion”)

DIVINE SOLIDARITY

My friend, Kenneth Tanner, put it this way: “Divine solidarity with humanity is radical. Jesus is not only in the corner of humanity but in every human’s corner *as* a fellow human who also happens to be God...

There is no human with whom Jesus does not stand. Not one person. Not one! Against every hurled accusation, every derision, and all that mocks our existence: famine, decay, murder, disaster, disease, and death, Jesus has our back. Always. Jesus stands with humanity and with *every* human person... against all that accuses us and belittles us and seeks to destroy us, and he does this as our human brother and as God.” — Kenneth Tanner



“Make Jesus Scandalous Again”

(by Brad Jersak from *“IN: Incarnation and Inclusion”*)

DIVINE SOLIDARITY

What Kenneth Taylor affirms sounds beautiful and inspiring and wonderful.

I wish I had said it. But then I stumble.

I remember the priests and pedophiles. Forgiveness is not just radical.

Forgiveness of the perp is the scandalous and nauseating f-word.

And then I remember myself. Who am I? The sinner at Jesus’ feet or the holy man bearing stones? What’ll it be, Brad? Mercy or condemnation?

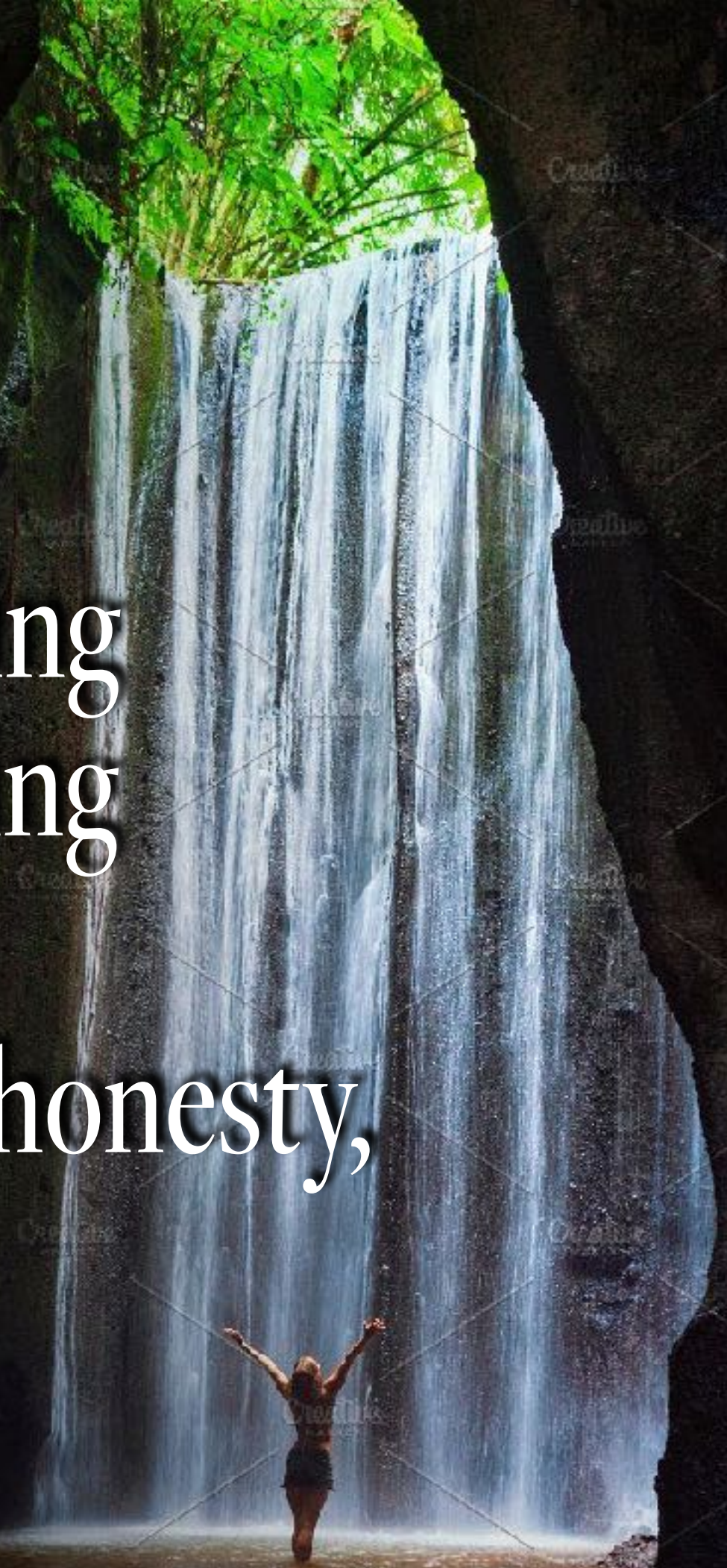
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What then? I pray for the victims of the clergy’s many sins, mine included. I pray for the mercy of such deep-level healing that their cry for justice will transcend retribution and bring the true justice of a redeemed world.

For the perpetrators, I pray for the severe mercy of rigorous honesty, heart-rending repentance, appropriate penance and real freedom to become more than what they are now.

For myself, I pray, *“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”* and *“God, grant them the same mercy I want for myself.”* I ask God to forgive the ‘unforgivable’ and redeem the most perverse by his transforming mercy.



“Make Jesus Scandalous Again”

(by Brad Jersak from *“IN: Incarnation and Inclusion”*)

“THAT WAS TOO EASY... BUT ‘EASY’ IS NOT EASY”

One reason forgiveness becomes the f-word is that we mistake it for a cheap “Get out of jail free” card. Absolution sounds too easy. But no. No, it’s not. Not for me and especially not for Jesus.

Forgiveness is NOT easy. The Passion—the torture and death, the burden of our sin—cost Christ everything. Forgiveness is not easy for those who’ve been devastated by the hurts and trespasses (violations) of others. And forgiveness is not easy for those who’ve long condemned themselves as unforgivable.



“Make Jesus Scandalous Again”

(excerpts from “IN: Incarnation and Inclusion” by Brad Jersak)

It’s hard for me to write about forgiveness... Seated on both sides of the terrible table of offense, whether fantasizing vengeance for the victims or empathizing with the offenders, forgiveness is the most demanding, excruciating process we’ll ever experience. **Forgiveness is cruciformity itself.**

So, whatever it was, the Cross of forgiveness is not “easy.” Least of all for Jesus Christ. We pray, *“Thine is the kingdom the power and the glory,”* but we might just as well pray, *“Thine is the sin, the sorrow and the shame of the Cross, forever and ever. Amen.”*

