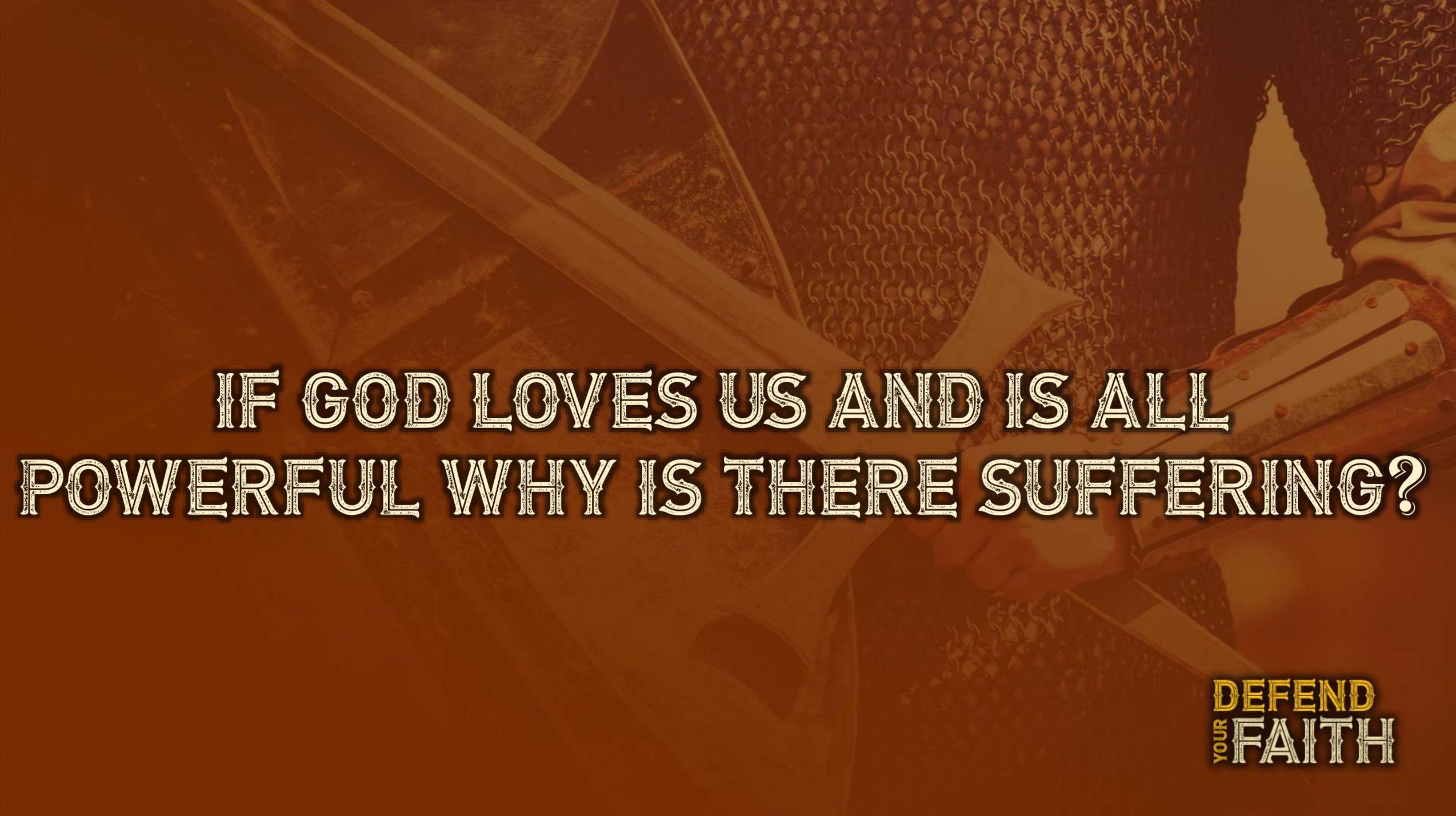




**DEFEND
YOUR
FAITH**

1 Peter 3:15



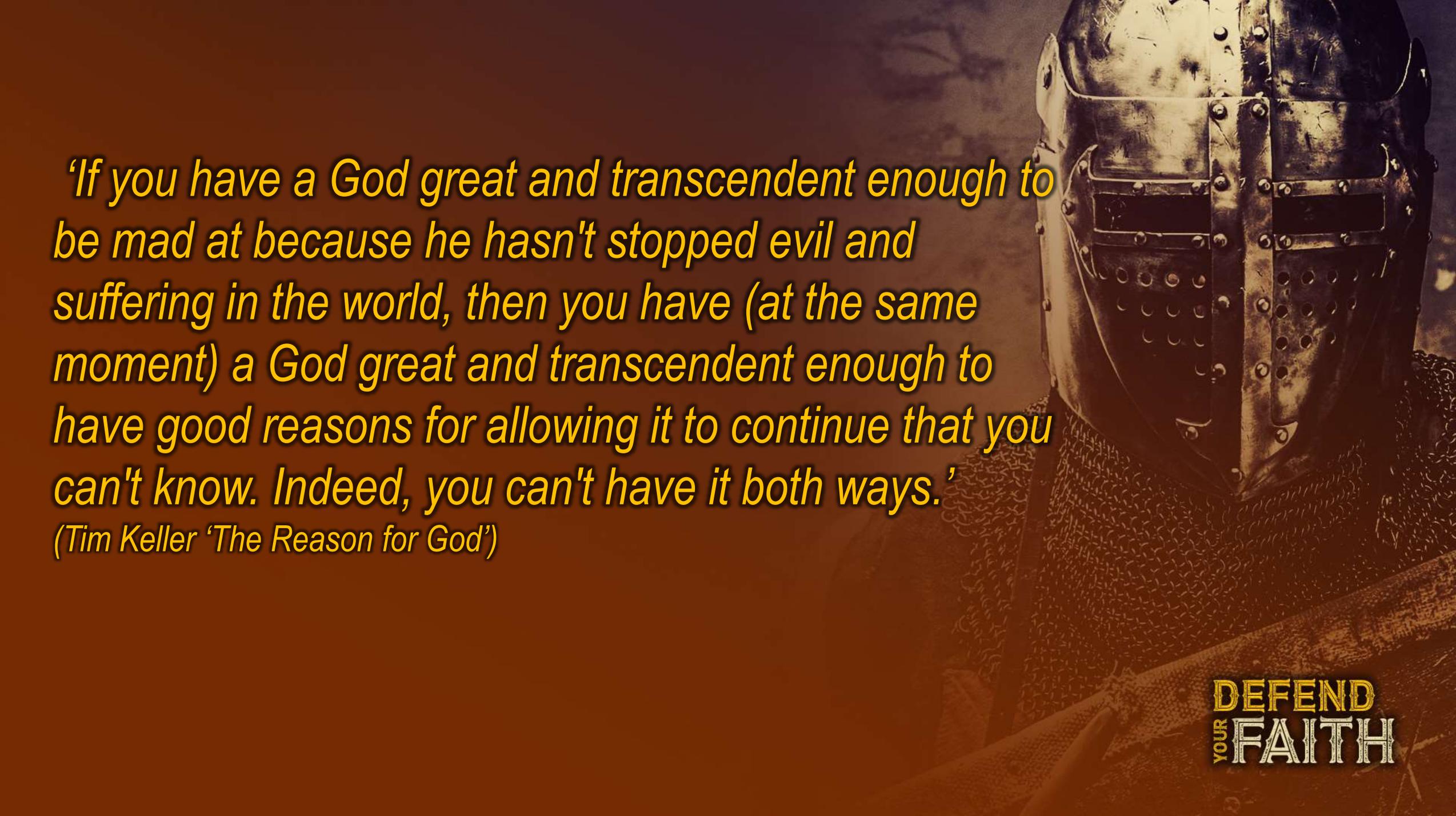
IF GOD LOVES US AND IS ALL
POWERFUL WHY IS THERE SUFFERING?

DEFEND
YOUR FAITH

A photograph of a slum street in Haiti, covered in trash and debris. The street is narrow and cluttered with various items, including plastic bottles, bags, and other waste. In the background, several people are walking, some holding umbrellas, suggesting it might be raining or recently rained. The buildings are makeshift, with corrugated metal roofs and walls. The overall scene depicts a state of poverty and suffering.

WHERE IS GOD WHEN I SUFFER?

Haiti: over 900 dead & rising, 90% of Southern Haiti destroyed



'If you have a God great and transcendent enough to be mad at because he hasn't stopped evil and suffering in the world, then you have (at the same moment) a God great and transcendent enough to have good reasons for allowing it to continue that you can't know. Indeed, you can't have it both ways.'

(Tim Keller 'The Reason for God')

**DEFEND
YOUR
FAITH**



2 CORINTHIANS 12:7-10

DEFEND
YOUR FAITH



SUFFERING IS A RESULT OF SIN

When we choose to sin we choose to suffer

DEFEND
YOUR FAITH



SUFFERING WILL NOT LAST FOREVER

DEFEND
YOUR FAITH



SUFFERING MAKES GOD ANGRY

Romans 2:5

But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

**DEFEND
YOUR
FAITH**

A painting depicting a man with a beard and long hair, looking upwards with a contemplative expression. A large, pale hand reaches down from the sky, hovering just above the man's head. The background is a soft, hazy blue and green, suggesting a sky or a divine realm. The overall mood is one of awe and spiritual seeking.

SUFFERING IS SELDOM SPECIFIC

Legalism: we get what we deserve

Suffering is an opportunity for God's work to be displayed in us



SUFFERING IS USED BY GOD

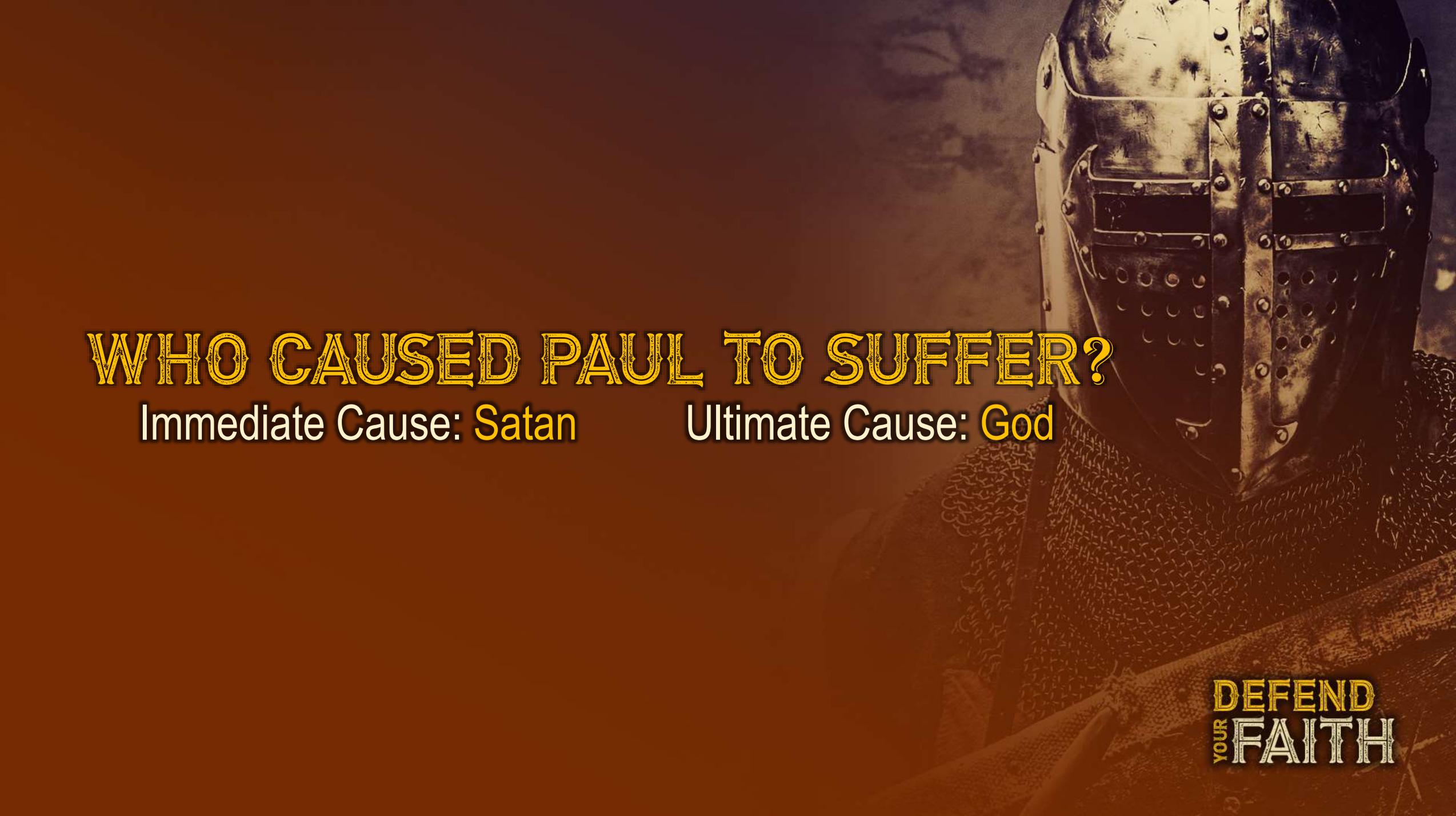
*CS Lewis: God whispers to us in our pleasures,
speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our
pains: It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world*

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GOD IS IN CONTROL OF ALL SUFFERING

- 'Thorn in the flesh' = Constant excruciating pain
- 'Messenger of Satan' = His pain is coming from Satan
- 'harass me' = His pain is hampering ministry
- 'was given me' = He did not bring this on himself

DEFEND
YOUR FAITH

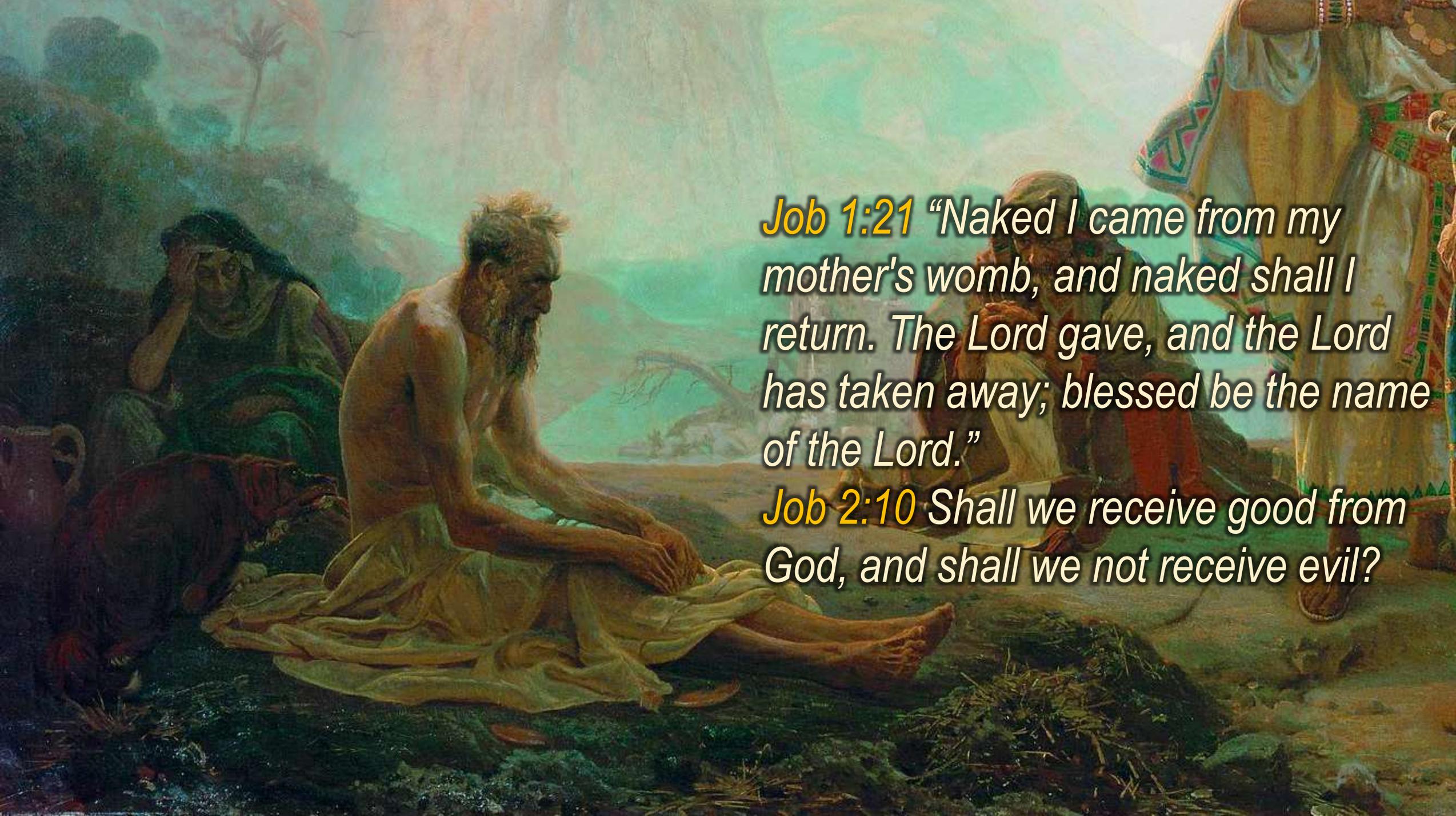


WHO CAUSED PAUL TO SUFFER?

Immediate Cause: Satan

Ultimate Cause: God

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YOUR FAITH



Job 1:21 "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Job 2:10 Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?



SUFFERING MATURES US

Suffering kept Paul from being Conceited

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YOUR FAITH



SUFFERING DRAWS US NEAR TO GOD

The proper response to suffering is Pleading



SUFFERING MAGNIFIES GOD'S GRACE

*God's grace is God's one way love, His unmerited,
unearned Love & acceptance*

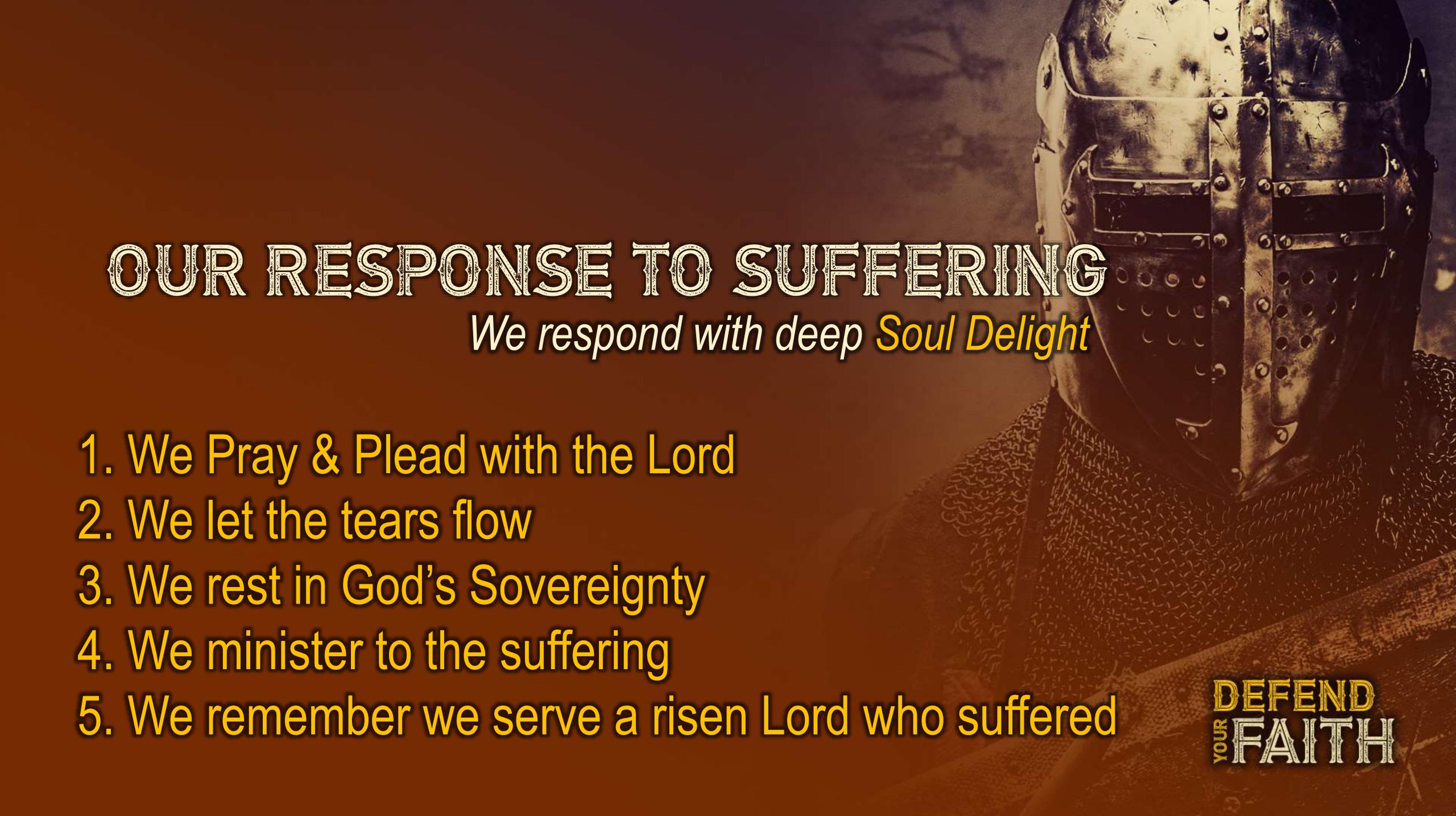
DEFEND
YOUR FAITH



SUFFERING MAGNIFIES GOD'S POWER

- God doesn't need Paul
- Weaker we are the more dependent we are on God
- Weaker we are the more God can fill us with his power & use us

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YOUR
FAITH



OUR RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

*We respond with deep **Soul Delight***

1. We Pray & Plead with the Lord
2. We let the tears flow
3. We rest in God's Sovereignty
4. We minister to the suffering
5. We remember we serve a risen Lord who suffered

DEFEND
YOUR
FAITH



The Answer to Suffering is Jesus