

## Lessons I Learned as a Jeweler

As a young woman in my twenties I worked for a while as a silversmith. My boss, Doug, was not much older than I was. We had a small storefront called the Smithery in a building in Salt Lake City. Across the hall from our store was a goldsmith's shop. It belonged to Doug's dad, from whom he had learned all his skills.

One day the dad walked over to us and asked if we wanted to see something. He had a bunch of old jewelry he was melting down for gold and thought it might be interesting to us. I had never seen the process, and so we closed shop for a few minutes and went to watch.

The oven was like a tiny kiln. It didn't need to be very big because jewelry isn't as big as pottery. As I recall it was about 18 x 18 x 24. There were gas flames inside and it was lined in white bricks. By the time I saw it, it was glowing fiery hot inside. The handful of old rings, minus their stones, was put in a little ceramic cup—the crucible. The crucible was slid into the middle of the fire. You could see inside. I watched as the pile of jumbled jewelry softened, and then melted and finally puddled into liquid gold. But it was covered with black specs and streaks. All of the grime from years of wear was still in there.

But as I watched an amazing thing happened. Little by little, or really, one by one, each impurity reached its flashpoint. Each piece of dirt or spec of lint would reach the necessary temperature and burn off with a flash of light. In a few minutes, all that was left was pure shimmering gold. And it did shimmer and shine in the flames. It swirled as if it were alive. Wow. It was so beautiful.

As I watched I knew that's what Heavenly Father wanted us to be. Pure gold. I knew that earth life was a refining process and a purifying process. I started to think about my own life. There were a few things that I knew had already been burned out. There were others that I knew God was presently trying to get to the proper temperature. And I also knew there were other things I wasn't yet aware of that we would have to get to in time.

I felt like saying, "Yes Lord. You can do with me what you want. I know it is a good process even if it sometimes burns. Go ahead."

Since then I have found a scripture that talks about this refining fire. "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." This is Zechariah 13:9. The scriptures also say: "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." This is Malachi 3:17 and it says a similar thing in D&C 101:3.

I hope when the Savior comes, I will be pure enough for him to use, and that he "will own me" and consider me one of his jewels. I have a pretty good idea now of what it will take.

LLM