



Too Soon to Quit by Warren W. Wiersbe Chapter 4 - Job, the Questioner
Presented by Dr. Tanya C. Ingram, Director, Christian Education
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I. God on the Witness Stand

- A. In the book of Job there are 329 questions, including the questions the Lord, Himself asks.
- B. When God asks questions, He already knows the answers-we don't know but He wants to teach us.
- C. In Genesis 3:9 the Lord asked Adam "where are you"? God knew where Adam was ,but Adam did not and that is why God called him.
- D. In job's first speech in Chapter 3, he asked why five times and later in the book he wanted to put God on the witness stand and question Him.
 - 1. *From Chapter 3:11-3:20 Job asks questions like "Why did I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?" Edwin Goode suggest by asking these and other questions, Job questions God as Creator.*
- E. Yet, Job was a man experiencing great emotional and physical pain, and people who hurt deeply are somethings guilty of speaking sharply to God.
 - 1. But consider what caused his anguish: in one day all his wealth was stolen or destroyed, and all his children and some of his servants were killed.
 - 2. His understanding of who he was, his status was all changed in one day
 - 3. All he had was the present, and then that changed when Job lost his health and was covered with painful ulcerated sores
 - 4. Unwelcomed in society he went outside the city and sat alone on the ash heap, scraping his body with a piece of broken pottery. He also experienced nightmares
 - 5. All these things he blamed on the Lord (Job 7:14, 13:21)
- F. Job's wife, out of sympathy or resentment told him to Curse God and die (Job 2:9)
- G. Job's friends were present but not encouraging. They contributed to his pain by suggesting that he was a secret sinner and the God was punishing him.
- H. However Job no ordinary citizen in the land of Uz, he was a man who was "blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil" (Job 1:3)

II. Questions Reveal Character

- A. Life is a school where we may not learn what the lesson was until we have flunked the examination.

- B. Sometimes this is so, but a crisis doesn't make a person; it only reveals what the person is made of. Job's mind was made up of questions. He began by taking the "intellectual" approach to life by insisting that God explain exactly what He was doing.
- C. But God didn't explain anything. He never told Job that Satan had declared war on Him and that Job was the battlefield.
- D. The basic issue was not "Why do the righteous suffer?" but "Is our God in Himself worth suffering for or are we obeying Him only because He rewards us?" Satan's challenge was, "does Job fear God for nothing?" (Job 1:9) He accused God of paying Job to obey Him, and this was a slander against the characters of both God and Job.
- E. We must be careful to not become "commercial Christians", those believers who only obey the Lord for a payoff in the end.
- F. Job was questioning what God was doing when he should have been discovering what God was like, because the purposes of God and the promises of God are both expressions of the character of God.
- G. We gain strength and learn God's intended lessons from our tests when we view them through the correct perspective.
 - 1. In Romans 9-11 after explaining some of the deepest mysteries of God relating to election, Paul stopped explaining and started worshipping and said "Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments and his paths beyond tracing out"! (Rom. 11:33-36)
 - 2. Certainly, asking questions is a good way to learn provided we ask the right questions in the right attitude about the right matters.
 - 3. However, God's people don't live on explanation they live on promises because God's promises reveal God's character.
- H. Job needed to get better acquainted with the God he had served faithfully and as a result, better understand himself and his critical friends.
- I. In the end the Lord rebuked the three friends for what they said about Job and the Lord, and He commended Job for speaking truth about Him (Job 42:7-10)
- J. He told Job to intercede for his friends and he would forgive them. It is important that when we experience difficulties in life we have friends that will be present and have good theology.
 - 1. How did Job's friends fail? First they lacked compassion. Second their theology was limited. Meaning their view of God while common for the day was limited and immature.
 - 2. When times are difficult you need friends that understand the gratitude and have the ability to reframe and see new opportunities in bad situations.
- K. Knowing the character of God helped Job; and can help us move from questioning God's character to trusting confidently in God when life seems to be falling apart.

III. The God of All Grace

- A. When Job least expected in one day he was left bankrupt and facing the burials of his ten children and several servants.
- B. Yet instead of cursing God, as Satan said Job would do (Job 1:11) Job blessed the name of the Lord saying "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised" (Job 1:21). Job reframed his experience.
- C. He found his strength in worshipping the God of sovereign grace.
- D. God in His grace gives us what we don't deserve and God in His mercy doesn't give us what we do deserve. "He is the God of all grace" (1 Peter 5:10) and His grace is sufficient for every believer in every situation (2 Cor. 12:9).
- E. Three times Job used the word "Lord" which is the Hebrew word "Yahweh" or Jehovah" and means the self existing God who is faithful to His covenants promises. As Job experiences his tests he began to know God in different ways moving from Elohim (God), His power name to "Jehovah" (Lord) His personal name. Test have a way of moving us toward a more personal intimate relationship with God.
- F. Satan and Job's friends slandered Job but God knew him best and thought very highly of Him. God made it clear to Satan that He had permitted Job to endure all this suffering "without any reason" Job 2:3. Yet Job knew nothing about the conversation in heaven
- G. Job wasn't perfect but he was a man of integrity and was not guilty of the accusations spoken by his friends and the devil.
- H. "The Lord gave" said Job. We witness Job reframed his thinking and if we are going to mature as Christians along our journey with God we much come to understand God differently. In God's sovereign grace the Lord gave Job all he had.
- I. "The Lord has taken away". This was not an indictment against the Lord, as though the Lord has sinned but rather an acknowledgement of His sovereign control over all things.
- J. The Lord also sent physical affliction so that his grieving wife told him he was better of dead. Job's response is found in Job 2:10 "Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?"
- K. But beyond the stark realities of pain and death, Job acknowledged the grace of God and the sovereignty of God. He found in his worship the strength to keep going

IV. The God Who Never Changes

- A. Our God is gracious and sovereign. He gives and He takes away and we soon learn how transitory life is and how much we need an unchanging Savior.
- B. Our circumstances and our feelings change; and if we are to have stability, we need an anchor to keep us from giving up. The anchor is hope and that hope is found in the unchanging character of God.
- C. Mariners drop their anchors downward and trust they will hold but Christians are anchored heavenward where Jesus is interceding for us, because Jesus is "our hope" (1 Timothy 1:1).

- D. Wiersbe says this “He cannot take away from His own people anything that they need to glorify Him. Mal 3:6 says “I the Lord do not change”, Heb. 13:8 says “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever”. This truth applies to all of God’s attributes
- E. Job was a poor, grieving, sick man but he was not a godless man. With all that he lost, he had not lost his God.
- F. Christians who finish strong reframe what we know about God, and that God is faithful. God is unchanging in what He is and what He says. That’s why Job was able to say “Though he slay me, yet will I hope (trust) in him” (Job 13:15)
- G. We all wrestle with the wisdom, justice and sovereignty of God. Job said “As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it (Job 4:7-8) But is this always true? The Scriptures seems to emphasize just the opposite! In this life, the wicked seem to get away with their wicked deeds while the innocent people suffer for doing good; and the books won’t be balanced until God opens them at the last judgement.
- H. For the Christian believer “hope” is not “hope so”. It’s not some kind of mysterious feeling or cloudy vision, or a child desperately wanting a Christmas gift.
- I. Paul wrote about hope in Romans 5:1-5,
 1. Hope comes from the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 2. We have hope because of salvation, because of the indwelling Spirit and because of our suffering.
 3. Faith, hope and love combine to give us peace *with* God and the peace *of* as well as access into the treasury of God’s grace build our character.
 4. Hope generates endurance and endurance the ability to wait for God to work out His purposes in His time.

V. The God Who Refines Us

- A. Job said in (23:10) “¹⁰ But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold. Job 23:10 (NIV2011).
- B. Job reshapes his thinking about what he accepts about the tests of life.
- C. Maturing Christians come to understand that God never misuses our crisis. All that we experience God is using it to shape and grow us.
- D. The covering God of all grace is faithful and unchanging. He loves us too much to harm us and is too wise to make a mistake.
- E. In times of suffering we plant the seeds of faith and wait patiently for the harvest.
- F. Job used several images to convey the misery of his situation including a storm (9:17); a war (19:11-12) and a flood (27:10); but the image of the goldsmith’s furnace is perhaps most instructive.
- G. In spite of our natural weakness and our frequent disobedience we are more valuable to God than gold is to us. Yes we are made of clay and when we die our bodies will turn to dust

but until then we have this treasure in jars of clay to that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us (2 Cor. 4:7)

- H. Job uses the word “when”. Along our journey with Christ we recognize that our season of suffering has an end date.
- I. When God allows His children to suffer, it’s because He has a special purpose in mind. He isn’t obligated to explain the purpose to us, in fact we may not understand what really happened until we get to heaven. However, we don’t live on explanations, we live on promises; and Job 23:20 promised that our trials can refine us and bring glory to God.
- J. The furnace not only purifies the gold but it makes it possible to be hammered or pressed permanently out of shape without breaking or cracking it. When gold is in this form in the right hands it can be created into something useful and beautiful.
- K. Weirsbe says “when the Lord puts His children into the furnace, He keeps His eye on the clock and His hand on the thermostat!” He knows how long and how much, so we never need to fear what the future holds.

VI. The God Who Shuts Our Mouths

- A. Job reminds us that our God exercises sovereign grace, He is faithful and He is a loving Father. God allows Job to question Him, and even challenges God on why He allows suffering and injustice.
- B. Job reminds us that whether we are in the midst of the battle or the furnace, God is there with us speaking to us from His Word.
- C. Charles Spurgeon said “The promises of God never shine so rightly in the furnace of affliction”.
- D. Throughout chapters 3-37, the Lord had said nothing. As soon as Elihu stopped speaking, the Lord spoke and God told Job to be silent because it was time for Him to ask the questions.
- E. God asked Job over fifty questions. The last one question was “Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him”? (Job 40:2) Job’s response is “I am unworthy-how can I reply to You I put my hand over my mouth, I spoke once, but I have not answered twice, but I will say no more (Job 40:3-5).
- F. God’s wisdom is on display. This left Job speechless. Others whose mouths were shut by God include Joseph’s (Gen. 45:1-3) and Moses (Deut. 3:26)
- G. Warren Wiersbe asked this question “Has your mouth ever been shut by God?” Have you ever argued and challenged God insisting that He explain everything to you?
- H. God always gives His best to those who leave the choice to Him.

VII. The God of Mystery

- A. During his time of suffering and sorrow, Job had been reminded that God is gracious and sovereign, faithful and trustworthy, loving and patient, awesome and mysterious.

- B. Job's experience brought him to the place of humility and repentance. "Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know he confessed (Job 42:3).
- C. It is a high and holy hour in our Christian walk when we accept what we cannot explain and bow in worship before the God who manifests His attributes yet remains mysterious.
- D. We can't explain Him, but we know we can trust Him.
- E. The secret things belong to the Lord our God but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever that we may follow all the words of this law Deuteronomy 29:29.
- F. Obedience to what we already know is the secret of accepting and perhaps unlocking some of the mysteries that puzzle us.
- G. Jesus said in John 7:17 "Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God"
- H. J. Sidlow Baxter said it perfectly "The Word of God is as wise in its reservations as it is wonderful in its revelations in its revelations. Enough is revealed to make faith intelligent. Enough is reserved to give faith scope for development.
- I. Obedience is the first step toward knowing God and His will.
- J. Job's first statement after God's second speech was "I know you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2). God can do all things and what He does is purposeful therefore we claim Romans 8:28.
- K. Jesus endured suffering far greater than what Job experienced or that we experience today and because He did, we shall be like Him forever (1John 3:1-3).
- L. God can do anything . He has a perfect plan and the power to execute that plan.
- M. God doesn't explain every detail to us, nor it is necessary that He do so. One of the delights of heaven will be watching our lives reviewed and understanding for the time what happened to us and why it happened. "Now I know in part; then I shall know fully even as I am fully know (1 Cor. 13:12)
- N. The Book of Job closes on a happy note, Job was healed of all his afflictions, his friends apologized for their harsh criticism, he and his wife had ten more children, he lived to a very old age and died with honor.