



# #1: Surviving Unanswered Questions

How do you keep your eyes on God when they're full of tears? Job survives almost unimaginable devastation, and his candor teaches us how to reach out to God in crisis.

*"Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. "...You have blessed the work of his hands... strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." Job 1:9-11*

### Job's sufferings:

• Economic (All possessions lost in three disasters)	• Emotional (Depression)
• Relational (All children lost)	• Mental (Confusion)
• Physical (Painful skin disease)	• Spiritual (See following...)

### Three Questions from Job:

1. "Is God \_\_\_\_\_?"

*"...though I call for help, there is no justice." Job 19:7b*

2. "Is God \_\_\_\_\_?"

*"Though I cry, 'I've been wronged!' I get no response..." Job 19:7a*

3. "Is God \_\_\_\_\_?"

*"When God passes me, I cannot see him... I cannot perceive him." Job 9:11 (Job 23:9)*

### Four Lessons from Job:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is healthier than \_\_\_\_\_

*"If I say, 'I will forget my complaint, I'll change my expression and smile,' I still dread all my sufferings." Job 9:27*

*"I can't be quiet! I'm angry and bitter. I have to speak!" Job 7:11(TEV)*

2. \_\_\_\_\_ is better than \_\_\_\_\_

*"Miserable comforters are you! Will your long-winded speeches never end?" Job 16:3*

*"What advice you have offered to one without wisdom! What great insight you have displayed! Who has helped you utter these words?!" Job 26:2, 3*

*"... Your maxims are proverbs of ashes." Job 13:10, 12*

(See Job 42:11 for a good example of how to comfort!)

3. \_\_\_\_\_ is more helpful than \_\_\_\_\_

(See Job 38-41– God's response to Job)

*"Surely I spoke of things I did not understand; things too wonderful for me to know." Job 42:3*

*"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes– myself, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" Job 19:25-27*

4. \_\_\_\_\_ is more important than \_\_\_\_\_

*Job said, "The Lord gave, and now He has taken away. May His name be praised!" Job 1:21 (TEV)*

Ask yourself: Am I worshipping the gifts or the giver?

What you can praise God for:

- That He is a good & loving God - Job 10:12
- That He is all-powerful - Job 37:5, 23
- That He notices every detail of life - Job 23:10, 31:4
- That He is in ultimate control - Job 41:11
- That He will ultimately save me - Job 19:25, 26

Job: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job 13:15 (KJV)

### Daily Meditations

Here's a chance to "take it home": Thought provoking questions about this weekend's topic!

### This week's memory verse:

*"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth." Job 19:25*

### Monday

Read Job 1:9-11. What do you think is the answer to the question posed by Satan to God in the Book of Job: Is it possible to love God for God's sake, and not merely for the benefits?

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Describe an experience when you were tempted to doubt God's goodness: What questions did you ask? How were they similar or different from Job's?

*Bring your questions to God today. Thank Him for His power!*

## **Tuesday**

Each of Job's three friends makes a speech with Job responding – a cycle that gets repeated three times in the book. Only problem: His friends give terrible advice! Read Job 22.

Stupid – but familiar – answers from Job's friends:

- This happened because you sinned  
"Who, being innocent, has ever perished?" (Eliphaz) Job 4:7
- If you just have faith, you'll be healed  
"If you look to God and plead... and are pure & upright, he'll restore you." Job 8:6
- This is just a lesson  
"Blessed is the man God corrects, so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty." (Eliphaz) Job 5:17
- If you live right, you'll be prosperous  
"Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you." (Eliphaz) Job 22:21
- If you just read the Bible, you'll be fine  
"Are God's consolations not enough for you?" (Eliphaz) Job 15:11

God condemns Job's friends later for speaking "falsehoods". How is their advice false?

Read Job 42:11 for a good example of how to comfort! What do you learn from these three people about how to be -- and not to be -- a friend to someone in pain?

*Ask God to help you see the needs of your friends -- and wise ways to meet those needs.*

## **Wednesday**

Read Job 7:7-21. Job's friends talk about God; Job talks to God. In a few words, summarize the matters Job raises with God.

Which complaints can you personally identify with?

Read Job 9:32. Job never asks to be cured. Describe what it is he wants from God:

In what ways has Jesus Christ made Job's deepest dream a reality?

In tragedy, what difference does it make to know that God has come in the flesh?

*Thank God that He understands your current struggle because He has been here!*

## **Thursday**

Read Job 21:1-16. How does Job's reality check contrast with Zophar's view (20:29)?

What's made it tough for you to believe there's a good God running the world?

If you could speak directly with God, what unanswered questions would you ask?

Job's friends are convinced they have all the answers. Job only has questions, which he never gets answers for. How do you feel about living with unanswered questions?

*Bring to the Lord your unanswered questions. Ask Him for perspective and the wisdom to know how to live with these tensions.*

## **Friday**

Read Job 38:1-11; 31-41; 40:1-5. In these chapters, God speaks to Job. What common theme do all of God's questions have?

Job's friends said, in effect, you must repent. God takes a different approach. He gives Job no direct answer to his questions. Instead, how does Job gain perspective?

Why is perspective often better than answers, in the long run, in dealing with life's disappointments and pain?

What dimension does Job 19:25-27 add to this perspective?

*Ask God to help you live in worship and reverence of Him, with a healthy sense of the joys and brevity of life, and the certainty of life with God forever!*

## **Saturday**

Complete any devotions you may have missed and polish up the memory verse. *Please pray for the services this weekend. Thanks!*

Many questions this week adapted from Job: *Wrestling with God* by Paul Stevens