

Devotional Questions – Job 23, 24

1. *What does Job long for (Job 23:3)?*
2. *What would he do if his wish was granted (Job 23:4-5)?*
3. *What did he hope would be the result (Job 23:6-7)?*
4. *What problem did Job have (Job 23:8-9)?*
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What consequences do these sins bring (Job 24:11-12)?
9. *What should happen to people who do such things (Job 24:18-20)?*
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To what men does this apply?
Just evil men?
What is the point?
11. *Why does God not judge men immediately?*
What does that mean for us today?

Devotional Questions – Job 23, 24, Answers to Questions

See Dr Ruckman's commentary *The Book of Job* pp 112-113, 301-329, 337-344 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 750-752, 925 for detailed comment.

1. What does Job long for (Job 23:3)?

Job 23:3 states ***“Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!”*** Job earnestly desires an audience with God. He'll get one, as will everyone else, whether desirous of it or not.

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” Matthew 12:36.

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” Romans 14:12.

“Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead” 1 Peter 4:4-5.

The six questions of Job 26:2-4 are the Christian's preparation for ***“the judgment seat of Christ”*** Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10 when each of today's believers will ***“come even to his seat!”***

2. What would he do if his wish was granted (Job 23:4-5)?

Job 23:4 summarises what Job would do in that case. ***“I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.”***

Job has however already shown that though he earnestly desires to present them, his arguments would not override God's should they be contrary to Job's.

“I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand” Job 9:2-3.

Paul shows that God will checkmate every verbal opponent, whether saved or unsaved, whether ***“the righteous might dispute with him”*** Job 23:7 e.g. Peter, Matthew 16:22-23 or the unrighteous, e.g. Satan, Job 1:9-11, 2:4-5, showing that God knew what Satan did not ***“for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men”*** 1 Kings 8:39, 2 Chronicles 6:30, Acts 1:24. Compare Job 1:9-11, 2:4-5 with Job 23:10 ***“But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”***

Paul's statement about God versus every verbal opponent is as follows.

“God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged” Romans 3:4.

3. What did he hope would be the result (Job 23:6-7)?

Job hoped for strength and deliverance. He would receive both, Job 42:10-17, as David showed and of which today's believer has assurance as Paul testified.

“The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower” Psalm 18:2.

“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion” 2 Timothy 4:17.

4. *What problem did Job have (Job 23:8-9)?*

Job could not “*perceive*,” “*behold*” or “*see*” God however much he sought to. God nevertheless does promise a successful outcome for the search for Him that begins with the heart.

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart”
Jeremiah 29:13.

This writer can testify that a serious search for God began with deep concerns about life after death and reluctance to abide by “*every man did that which was right in his own eyes*” Judges 21:25. That search ended with belief in “*the gospel of the grace of God*” Acts 20:24 on July 19th 1967 according to:

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” John 1:12.

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” John 6:37.

Today’s believer has this further promise that Job did not know fully at the time of his ordeal.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” 1 John 3:2.

Note that David negates the NIVs’ incorrect substitutes of “*east...west...north...south*” for “*forward...backward...left hand...right hand*” Job 23:8-9.

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me” Psalm 139:7-10.

Job 23:8-9 show that Job typifies Israel in the Church Age when God has hidden Himself from her Matthew 13:44 as Isaiah states “**And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him**” Isaiah 8:27.

However, that does *not* mean, as the NIVs wrongly imply, that God’s immanence cannot be discerned in the physical universe. It most certainly can be as David and Isaiah revealed.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” Psalm 19:1.

“And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” Isaiah 6:3.

5. *What did Job believe would result from his trials (Job 23:10)?*

Job 23:10 states “**But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.**” Job anticipated that his ordeal would make him more obedient to God, as indeed was the case for the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” Hebrews 5:8.

That is why Peter exhorts today’s believers as follows.

“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” 1 Peter 1

6. What confidence did he express regarding God (Job 23:13-14)?

Job expresses what God would later state through Israel's prophets both with respect to the fulfilment of His purposes in principle and personally for His people both individually and collectively **"whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy"** Job 37:13.

"The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands" Psalm 138:8.

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" Isaiah 55:11.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" Jeremiah 29:11.

"For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD" Ezekiel 12:25.

Paul explains how the fulfilment of the Lord's purposes applies for today's believer with a very personal application.

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" 2 Corinthians 9:8.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" Ephesians 2:10.

"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it" Colossians 4:17.

7. What sins did Job say some people commit (Job 24:2-4, 9-10, 13-17)?

First note that the wrongdoings that Job 24:2-4, 9-10, 13-17 list are the reason for David's prayer. **"It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law"** Psalm 119:126:

- Job 24:2-4: Theft of private property with victimisation of the vulnerable contrary to:

Exodus 20:17 **"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."**

Proverbs 23:10 **"Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:"**

Zechariah 7:10 **"And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart."**

- Job 24:9-10: Child abduction and deprivation of necessities contrary to:

Exodus 22:22 **"Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child."**

Deuteronomy 14:29 **"And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest."**

Isaiah 58:7 **"Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"**

- Job 24:13-17: Murder, adultery and rebellion against God contrary to:

Exodus 20:13 **“Thou shalt not kill.”**

Exodus 20:14 **“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”**

1 Samuel 12:14 **“If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:”**

8. What consequences did the poor and needy suffer as a result (Job 24:5-8)?

Job 24:5-8 state that the poor and needy suffer homelessness, food shortage and hard slave labour. This is the fulfilment, particularly in the End Times, Revelation 6:5-6, of Proverbs 28:15 **“As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.”**

What consequences do these sins bring (Job 24:11-12)?

These sins bring forth desperate pleas to God from the victims as Solomon observed **“So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter”** Ecclesiastes 4:1 and again having particular fulfilment in the End Times.

“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Revelation 6:9-10.

Those making the pleas are further distressed because they do not see a prompt answer. Today’s believer should therefore keep in mind the Lord’s reassurance following His parable on **“the unjust judge”** Luke 18:6.

“And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily...” Luke 18:7-8.

9. What should happen to people who do such things (Job 24:18-20)?

“...so doth the grave...consume...those which have sinned...and wickedness shall be broken as a tree” Job 20:19-20 as David and Ezekiel prophesied, **“the Assyrian”** and **“Asshur”** Genesis 10:11, 2 Kings 19:36, Isaiah 37:37 being names for **“that Wicked,”** and as the Lord Jesus Christ will fulfil at the Second Advent.

“I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found” Psalm 37:35-36.

“Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs... Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth... Asshur is there and all her company: his graves are about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword: Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, and her company is round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living” Ezekiel 31:3, 15-16, 32:22-23.

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

Today's believer should therefore follow Paul's exhortation.

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" 2 Thessalonians 2:15.

10. What does God do to men (Job 24:22-24)?

Job 24:22 states **"He draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and no man is sure of life."**

The 1984, 2011 NIVs wrongly read **"But God drags away the mighty by his power; though they become established, they have no assurance of life"** in Job 24:22.

The NKJV wrongly reads **"But God draws the mighty away with His power; He rises up, but no man is sure of life"** in Job 24:22 in the first clause. Note that:

- Job 24:22 is not a reference to God. Job 24:22 is a reference to **"the beast"** the satanic world ruler of the End Times of whom John prophesies **"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority"** Revelation 13:1-2.
- Job 24:22 therefore shows that it is not God that **"draweth also the mighty with his power"** but **"the beast"** as John reveals **"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast"** Revelation 17:12-13.
- Job 24:22 states clearly that **"no man is sure of life"** not merely **"the mighty"** of the NIVs. The Lord Himself described how uncertain life would be in the End Times.

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" Matthew 24:22.

"And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days" Mark 13:20.

Job 24:23-24 describe what God does to men. **"Though it be given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his eyes are upon their ways. They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low; they are taken out of the way as all other, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn."** Moses has therefore described what God does to men.

"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men...Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" Psalm 90:3, 5-10.

To what men does this apply?

In principle Job 24:23-24 apply to all men as James reveals. **"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away"** James 4:14.

Just evil men?

No. Note that Psalm 90:3, 5-10 is not aimed only at evil men. Solomon's observations apply in principle as much now as when first written.

"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" Ecclesiastes 3:20.

"All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath" Ecclesiastes 9:2.

What is the point?

The point for all men today is as the Lord Himself expressed it. **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"** John 11:25-26.

11. *Why does God not judge men immediately?*

God has explained why through the prophet Ezekiel. **"For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye"** Ezekiel 18:32.

What does that mean for us today?

It means what Paul exhorted.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine...watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" 2 Timothy 4:2, 5.

Finally, in the light of Job 23:10 **"But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold"**:



jewishharvest.blogspot.co.uk/2012/08/this-i-recall-therefore-have-i-hope.html