

Devotional Questions – Job 12:1-14:1-22

1. *What does Job say about his 'friends'* (Job 12:3)? *They were “his friends” in spite of “all their hard speeches” Jude 15 against Job and even God’s rebuke to them, Job 42:7. See Job 2:11, 32:3, 42:10. “His friends” saw the whole of Job’s suffering with him from beginning to end, even though Job’s wife did not. That is a lesson for today’s believer. “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” Proverbs 17:17.*
2. *How does Job show that the wisdom of his 'friends'* was really common knowledge (Job 12:7-12)? *See note following Question 1.*
3. *What does Job say about God’s wisdom and power that has been shown to man (Job 12:13-25)?*
4. *In spite of what Job says about God’s wisdom, what is still Job’s desire (Job 13:3)?*
5. *How could the friends have been a real help to Job in his sufferings (Job 13:5)?*
6. *[Of] What is Job so sure in Job 13:13-19?*
7. *What does he say is his confidence in this?*
8. *What two requests does Job have of God (Job 13:20-21)?*
9. *What does Job request that God show him (Job 13:22-28)?*
10. *What does Job think about life in general (Job 14:1-6)?*
11. *How does Job illustrate man’s hopelessness (Job 14:7-12)?*
12. *What hope does Job have (Job 14:13-15)?*
13. *What does Job conclude finally about hope (Job 14:19)?*
14. *What finally awaits man (Job 14:20) – why is that important to know?*
15. *What 'extra' knowledge do we have that Job did not – and how does that help us today?*

Devotional Questions – Job 12:1-14:1-22, Answers to Questions

See Dr Ruckman's commentary *The Book of Job* pp 143-191 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 740-743 for detailed comments.

1. *What does Job say about his 'friends'* (Job 12:3)?* *They were **"his friends"** in spite of **"all their hard speeches"** Jude 15 against Job and even God's rebuke to them, Job 42:7. See Job 2:11, 32:3, 42:10. **"His friends"** saw the whole of Job's suffering with him from beginning to end, even though Job's wife did not. That is a lesson for today's believer. **"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity"** Proverbs 17:17.

Job 12:3 states **"But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?"**

Job is saying that his friends don't know any more than he does. That is in keeping with Solomon's observation in Ecclesiastes 1:10 **"Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."**

Even though the Athenians were fixated on **"some new thing"** Acts 17:21, the lesson is that only God can genuinely bring forth **"new things"** as Isaiah prophesies,

"Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them" Isaiah 42:9.

"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" Isaiah 43:19.

"Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them" Isaiah 48:6.

God's **"new things"** for today's believer are:

- Ministry of **"the new testament"** Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25, 2 Corinthians 3:6, Hebrews 9:14
- Transformation into **"a new creature"** 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15
- Certainty of **"new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"** 2 Peter 3:13 with Revelation 21:1
- Bestowal of **"a new name"** Revelation 2:17, 3:12
- A mansion in **"the holy city, new Jerusalem"** Revelation 21:2 with John 14:2.

Today's believer has certainty of these **"new things."**

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" Revelation 21:5.

2. *How does Job show that the wisdom of his 'friends'* was really common knowledge (Job 12:7-12)? *See note following Question 1.*

Job states that all men know what his friends have said about God because God has already revealed it. Job is in effect pre-empting Paul who said **"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"** Romans 1:19-20.

Job cites as evidence of **"that which may be known of God...the invisible things of him"**:

- *Evidence of God as Creator of unique life forms and their particular habitats* Job 12:7-9 i.e. Psalm 104:10-28 e.g. **"O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein"** Psalm 104:24-26
- *Evidence of God as Sustainer of all His creation* Job 12:10 i.e. **"upholding all things by the word of his power"** Hebrews 1:3
- *Evidence of God as Designer for all His creation* Job 12:11 e.g. **"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him"** 1 Corinthians 12:18
- *Evidence of God as Originator of intelligence for all His creation* Job 12:12, 13 i.e. **"For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding"** Proverbs 2:6 - except for the ostrich Job 39:17 – as revealed in the Person **"of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"** Colossians 2:2-3.

All of the above is excellent information but it is not **"a very present help in trouble"** Psalm 46:1 for Job. Today's believer should remember **"...Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth"** 1 Corinthians 8:1. Therefore **"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"** Ephesians 4:29.

3. *What does Job say about God's wisdom and power that has been shown to man (Job 12:13-25)?*
- *His destruction of anything created e.g. of "the world that then was" 2 Peter 3:6 with Genesis 1:1-2 and His imprisonment of anyone ungodly e.g. of "Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High" Psalm 107:10 cannot be reversed by man, Job 12:14*
 - *His command of the elements e.g. via drought "As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" 1 Kings 17:1 i.e. God's word through Elijah or via flood e.g. "bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly" 2 Peter 2:5 cannot be overruled by man, Job 12:15*
 - *His knowledge of and judgements upon men e.g. "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" Jeremiah 17:10 cannot be resisted by man, Job 12:16-21*
 - *His understanding of "the nether parts of the earth" Ezekiel 31:14, 16, 18, 32:18, 24 cannot be equalled by man, Job 12:22*
 - *His omnipotence over "all the nations of the earth" Genesis 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, Jeremiah 26:6, 33:9, 44:8 and over "all the kings of the earth" 1 Kings 10:23, 2 Chronicles 9:22, 23, Psalm 102:15, 138:4 e.g. "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing" Isaiah 40:15 and "And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him" Daniel 2:21-22 with Psalm 2:1-12 e.g. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed...He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure" Psalm 2:2, 4-5 cannot even be imagined by man, Job 12:23-25.*

In sum, man is "a worm" Job 25:6 before God. Therefore as Isaiah warns "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?" Isaiah 45:9.

Today's believers should therefore remember David's exhortation especially in that their praise of God is itself assurance of salvation. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever" Psalm 111:10.

4. *In spite of what Job says about God's wisdom, what is still Job's desire (Job 13:3)?*

Job 13:3 states "**Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.**"

That is Job's desire and God grants it for any man *but on God's terms, not on man's terms.*

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" Isaiah 1:18.

5. *How could the friends have been a real help to Job in his sufferings (Job 13:5)?*

On the basis of what his friends have said, Job wishes they'd maintained their initial seven-day code of silence, Job 2:13.

Noting David's testimony "**This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me**" Psalm 119:50 and Zechariah's observation "**And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words**" Zechariah 1:13 see *Question 2* and Ephesians 4:29 "**Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.**"

6. *[Of] What is Job so sure in Job 13:13-19?*

- *His trust in God no matter what but also in himself*, Job 13:15. Solomon reveals that trust in God has *no room* for trust in self. "**Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths**" Proverbs 3:5-6.
- *His salvation from God for a pure life*, Job 13:16. This is central to Old Testament salvation as David reveals. "**LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart**" Psalm 15:1-2 and context i.e. Psalm 15:3-5.
- *His justification by God for a well-argued cause*, Job 13:17-19. However, Job has said earlier "**If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand**" Job 9:3 and this proves to be the case.

"Then Job answered the LORD, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further" Job 40:3-5.

Today's believer should remember that his standing before God is as Paul states "**Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus**" Romans 3:24-26.

7. *What does he say is his confidence in this?*

Job's confidence is in the soundness of "**mine own ways**" Job 13:15 i.e. *the flesh*, for which Job was suffering affliction, Job 2:7. See *Question 6* and first bullet point with respect to Proverbs 3:5-6 "**Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.**"

Note David's and Paul's exhortations following further revelation that Job did not have. Today's believer should abide by those exhortations.

"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies" Psalm 119:59.

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" Philippians 3:3.

8. *What two requests does Job have of God (Job 13:20-21)?*

Job 13:21 states ***“Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid.”***

Job requests as David does ***“Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand”*** Psalm 39:10 and in place of fear ***“Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit”*** Psalm 51:12.

Today’s believer can be encouraged by the Lord’s promise of John 13:7 ***“Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.”***

As Paul said **“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”** Romans 8:28.

9. *What does Job request that God show him (Job 13:22-28)?*

Job makes request to God to show him:

- ***“How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin”*** Job 13:23
- ***“Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?”*** Job 13:24.

Job 13:15 notwithstanding, Job’s requests show that he understandably feels that God has victimised him. Jeremiah’s words of comfort are worth noting for today’s believer to know that they are so and will come to pass.

“For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most High, To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not” Jeremiah 3:31-36 and context.

10. *What does Job think about life in general (Job 14:1-6)?*

Job thinks the same about life as Moses expressed it.

“Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not...Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass” Job 14:1-2, 5.

“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 90:9-10 and context.

Note therefore Moses’ and Paul’s exhortations *on time management* e.g.

- How much time should be allocated for any particular project such as preparation of a two-A4 side Gospel message for open-air witness and what priority should it have, certainly no later than the day before for the open-air witness message.
- How activities may be combined such as reviewing verses of scripture while in the gym, also to help override the background ‘music.’

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” Psalm 90:12.

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” Ephesians 5:15-16.

11. How does Job illustrate man's hopelessness (Job 14:7-12)?

Job says that man has less hope than a felled tree left only with its stump, Job 14:7-8. The tree can grow back "*through the scent of water*" Job 14:9 but man is "*As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up*" Job 14:11 because God said "*neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth*" Genesis 9:11.

Therefore "*man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost...So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep*" Job 14:10, 12.

Further revelation draws a distinction between men beyond Job 14:10, 12 in that "**The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death**" Proverbs 14:32.

Note therefore the "*good words and comfortable words*" Zechariah 1:13, *Question 5*, from David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself concerning "*the hope of the righteous*" Proverbs 10:28.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" Psalm 1:1-3.

"The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish" Proverbs 10:28.

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise, Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" Isaiah 26:19.

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit" Jeremiah 17:7-8.

"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.

Paul answers the Lord's question as follows, for every one of today's believers.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" Romans 15:13.

12. What hope does Job have (Job 14:13-15)?

Job 14:13-15 indicates that his earlier statements notwithstanding, Job 10:21, 22, 14:10, 12, Job "*hath hope in his death*" Proverbs 14:32 as Job declares later with respect to "*the hope and resurrection of the dead*" Acts 23:6.

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" Job 19:25-26.

Today's believer has, if anything, "*a more sure word of prophecy*" 2 Peter 1:19 as Peter also explains.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" 1 Peter 1:3-4.

13. *What does Job conclude finally about hope (Job 14:19)?*

Job in Job 14:19 says of God that ***“thou destroyest the hope of man.”*** This is the fate of ***“a certain rich man”*** Luke 12:16 who had despised ***“the true riches”*** Luke 16:11. ***“But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God”*** Luke 12:21-22.

Job’s statements in Job 14:19, 20 and in Job 14:21, 22 suggest that he is giving way to despair again as in Job 14:10, 12 after his testimony to ***“the hope and resurrection of the dead”*** Acts 23:6 in Job 14:13-15. Though ***“the righteous hath hope in his death”*** Proverbs 14:32 in the Old Testament, it is the *New Testament* saint that has ***“hope...both sure and stedfast.”***

“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil” Hebrews 6:19.

Today’s believer should therefore remember John’s exhortation.

“And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” 1 John 2:17.

14. *What finally awaits man (Job 14:20) – why is that important to know?*

Job 14:20 states ***“Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.”*** Job is saying what Moses said about what awaits mortal man. See *Question 10* and Psalm 90:9-10 that Moses introduces as follows.

“Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men” Psalm 90:3 as God said to Adam after ***“as by one man sin entered into the world”*** Romans 5:12. ***“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”*** Genesis 3:19.

James’ exhortation should therefore be remembered. See *Question 13* and 1 John 2:17.

“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. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that” James 4:14-15.

15. *What ‘extra’ knowledge do we have that Job did not – and how does that help us today?*

Today’s believer has certainty that Job did not have or comprehend only intermittently. See *Question 11* and Job 14:10, 12, *Question 12* and Job 14:13-15 and *Questions 13, 14* and Job 14:19, 20 with Job 14:21, 22.

- Certainty of ***“new things”*** Isaiah 48:6. See *Question 1*.
- Certainty of ***“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”*** Romans 3:24. See *Question 6*.
- Certainty of knowing ***“that all things work together for good to them that love God”*** Romans 8:28. See *Question 8*.
- Certainty of ***“the resurrection, and the life”*** John 11:25. See *Question 11*.
- Certainty of ***“a more sure word of prophecy”*** 2 Peter 1:19 with 1 Peter 1:3-4. See *Question 12*.
- Certainty of ***“hope...both sure and stedfast”*** Hebrews 6:19. See *Question 13*.

These manifold certainties help today’s believer as they did Paul.

“For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” 2 Timothy 1:12.