

Devotional Questions – Job 21:1-34

1. *What three things does Job ask his friends to do (Job 21:2-3, 5)?*
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. *What did Job expect from them (Job 21:3)?*
3. *What should the friends do when they saw his condition (Job 21:5)?*
4. *What did Job say happened to wicked people (Job 21:7-9)?*
How would this compare to his friends' view?
5. *What two questions do the wicked ask (Job 21:15)?*
 - a.
 - b.*How would we answer them?*
6. *How did he summarise the attitude towards God (Job 21:14-15)?*
7. *What did Job ask regarding the wicked (Job 21:17-18)?*
What is his point?
8. *What did Job accuse the friends of saying (Job 21:27-28)?*
9. *What does Job say concerning his friends (Job 21:34)?*

Devotional Questions – Job 21:1-34, Answers to Questions

See Dr Ruckman's commentary *The Book of Job* pp 218, 267-290 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 748-749 for detailed comment.

1. What three things does Job ask his friends to do (Job 21:2-3, 5)?

a. ***“Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations”*** Job 21:2.

Job 21:2 is an application of 2 Samuel 23:2 ***“The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue”***. ***“Consolations”*** is ***“comfort”*** Jeremiah 16:7 and ***“comfort”*** is a feature of ***“The words of the LORD”*** Psalm 12:6 according to Zechariah 1:13 ***“And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words.”*** The Lord Himself is therefore saying through Job as He would through Moses ***to all men including today's believer and Job's friends “Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God”*** Deuteronomy 12:28.

What God therefore wants through Job from all hearers of ***“The words of the LORD”*** Psalm 12:6 including today's believer as well as Job's friends is *obedience to “all the words of the LORD”* Exodus 4:28, 24:3, 4, Joshua 24:27, 1 Samuel 8:10, Jeremiah 36:4, 11, 43:1 as Deuteronomy 12:28 itself indicates and as James exhorts. ***“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves”*** James 1:22.

b. ***“Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on”*** Job 21:3.

God through Job wants all men including today's believer as well as Job's friends *to hear His speech* as the Lord said through Isaiah ***“Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech”*** Isaiah 28:23, whether the hearers be willing as today's believers should be or not. That is a good principle for today's believers to ***“be witnesses unto me”*** Acts 1:8.

“And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious” Ezekiel 2:7 with Ezekiel 2:5, 3:11, 27.

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” 2 Timothy 4:2-4. The ***“fables”*** include ecumenism, environmentalism and evolution countered by 2 Corinthians 6:19-20, Genesis 8:22, Nehemiah 9:6 with Isaiah 51:6 respectively.

c. ***“Mark me, and be astonished, and lay your hand upon your mouth”*** Job 21:5.

God through Job *in the light of Job 19:29* ***“Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment”*** wants all men including today's believer as well as Job's friends to ***“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles”*** Isaiah 42:1 because as the Lord says further ***“Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider”*** Isaiah 52:12-14.

God through Job wants all men including today's believer as well as Job's friends to ***“know there is a judgment”*** Job 19:29, that God in the Person of ***“my servant”*** Isaiah 42:1, 52:12 ***“...shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people...”*** Isaiah 2:4.

“Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways” Haggai 1:5 with Haggai 1:7 as David did and responded rightly. **“I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies”** Psalm 119:59.

2. *What did Job expect from them (Job 21:3)?*

See *Question 1* and remarks on Job 21:3. Job expected rejection and ridicule as Isaiah prophesied for the Lord Jesus Christ. **“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not”** Isaiah 53:3.

That is what believers today should expect as the Lord Himself has stated. **“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you”** John 15:18-19.

3. *What should the friends do when they saw his condition (Job 21:5)?*

See *Question 1* and remarks on Job 21:5. Job’s friends are just as vulnerable as he is and they should not presume otherwise via **“the tongue that speaketh proud things”** Psalm 12:3 as David clearly understood with the following prayer.

“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer” Psalm 19:13 as the Lord admonished **“for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh”** Matthew 12:34.

Note therefore Paul’s exhortation for today’s believer. **“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”** 1 Corinthians 10:12.

4. *What did Job say happened to wicked people (Job 21:7-9)?*

Job 21:7-9 show that Job thought what Solomon later expressed about wicked men. **“All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth his life in his wickedness”** Ecclesiastes 7:15.

How would this compare to his friends’ view?

Job’s friends appear to have viewed the wicked as Zophar did. **“Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?”** Job 20:4-5.

It is therefore essential to have God’s perspective of **“a just man”** and **“a wicked man”** as Solomon expressed it.

“Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God” Ecclesiastes 8:12-13.

Today’s believers should therefore always aim for God’s perspective **“whatsoever ye do”** 1 Corinthians 10:31 as Paul and James expressed it. Note the hendiadys in Colossians 3:17 and compare it with Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 1:1 where the NIVs, NKJV comply with New Age inclusivity.

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him...And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” Colossians 3:17, 23.

“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.

5. *What two questions do the wicked ask (Job 21:15)?*

- a. *“What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?”* as Pharaoh said *“And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go”* Exodus 5:2.
- b. *“and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?”* as Israel said *“Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?”* Malachi 3:14.

Both are like *“the wicked”* Psalm 73:3 of Psalm 73:11 and context *“And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?”*

God’s judgment fell upon Pharaoh in that *“Pharaoh’s chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea”* Exodus 15:4 but was averted for Israel in that *“Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name”* Malachi 3:16.

How would we answer them?

The way the Lord did *“when he had called the people unto him with his disciples...For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”* Mark 8:34, 36.

6. *How did he summarise the attitude towards God (Job 21:14-15)?*

Rebellion and stubbornness for having *“rejected the word of the LORD.”* Shun rebellion and stubbornness. They terminate God’s blessing as Samuel warned Saul. *“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king”* 1 Samuel 15:23.

7. *What did Job ask regarding the wicked (Job 21:17-18)?*

See *Question 4* and remarks on Ecclesiastes 8:12-13.

What is his point?

Job’s point is that of David and it should be remembered by today’s believer. *“The ungodly...are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish”* Psalm 1:4-6.

8. *What did Job accuse the friends of saying (Job 21:27-28)?*

Job accuses his friends of saying in effect what Eliphaz said in Job 4:20 *“They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it”* and as Bildad said *“the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought”* Job 8:22. Job acknowledges this to be true *“That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath”* Job 21:30 but has insisted that *“my prayer is pure”* Job 16:17 i.e. that he is *not* among *“the wicked”* contrary to his friends’ accusations, Job 8:6, 11:14, 15:5-6. That is also true and today’s believer should never be among the *“false accusers”* 2 Timothy 3:3, Titus 2:3.

9. *What does Job say concerning his friends (Job 21:34)?*

Job 21:34 states *“How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?”* Job says that his friends have lied about him and left him comfortless. Today’s believer should remember Paul’s exhortation and the Lord’s promise.

“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour...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 4:25, 29.

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” John 14:18.