

When Men Accuse God

In the Old Testament the Bible tells us about a man named Job. This man was incredibly righteous and upright. He loved the Lord and served God faithfully. Job led an exemplary life – caring for the poor, looking after widows and orphans, and doing everything he could to help those around him. In fact, he was such an upright man that God Himself said Job was literally the most godly person in the *entire world*:

Job 1:8: “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”

Job was not wicked or corrupt. He pursued righteousness with all of his heart and he spent his days doing what was right. But one day Job's life fell apart. In a single day all ten of Job's children were killed – in the same freak accident. Losing one child is heartbreaking enough, but Job lost *all* of his children. Then, on that same day, thieves came and stole all of his wealth and left him penniless. A short time later he lost his health and came down with multiple terrible diseases. In a brief span of time this upright, godly man lost *everything*.

To Job it seemed incredibly unfair. After all, Job had spent his life doing what was right! He helped the poor. He obeyed the Lord. He loved righteousness. He did all the right things – and yet God took *everything* away from him. God did not leave him with a single child. In an instant Job became the poorest person in the land. Even Job's health was gone! It was an absolutely crushing blow, and Job did not understand how God could possibly do this to him.

How could God allow this to happen? Hadn't Job been perfect and upright? Hadn't Job done all the right things? Job hadn't been going around robbing the poor or killing innocent people. He was one of the good guys! How could God possibly do this to him? Why would God destroy his life? Job hadn't done anything to deserve it.

In fact, Job was so sure that he didn't deserve this treatment that he said God had made a mistake:

Job 10:2: “I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

10:3 Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

4 Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?

5 Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days,

6 That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

7 Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.”

Job demanded an explanation from God and told Him that He was doing something wrong. It was *wrong* for God to oppress Job. It was *wrong* for God to despise him. After all, Job was a righteous man. The Lord was clearly out of touch and had no idea what was going on – and so Job wanted to talk to God and set Him straight:

Job 13:3: “Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.”

Job wanted to reason with God *in order to show the Lord that He was wrong*. Job really wanted to correct God and bring Him back in line. He thought that it was terribly unfair there was no way to bring a complaint against God and force Him to respond:

Job 16:21: “O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour!”

Job kept insisting that what God was doing was wrong:

Job 19:6: “Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.

7 Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.”

Job firmly believed that since he was righteous it was therefore wrong for God to kill all of his children, take away all of his wealth, and ruin his health. God was treating him as if he had committed some great sin, but Job was innocent. Therefore God had to be wrong and God needed correction. God had perverted justice and was out of touch. Job desperately wanted to confront God and force Him to apologize.

This is not an uncommon attitude. The world is filled with people who believe as Job did. There are many who have lost jobs, lost wealth, and lost loved ones. They trusted God to bless them and give them what they wanted, but instead their cherished family members died. They looked for healing but no healing came. God did *not* give them what they desired. Instead of peace and goodness they were given pain and suffering – and so they lash out against God. Some abandon the faith entirely and accuse God of being evil and demented. Others angrily proclaim that God had sinned against them and deserves to be punished for what He has done. They rail against God and say that if He was truly a *good* God then He would do the things that they demand He do. No good God would ever allow disaster to come into a person's life. No good God would allow family members to die. Therefore God must be evil.

The underlying theme to all of these complaints is that God is only good if He does what we want Him to do, and God has no right to allow any pain or suffering to enter our life. Men believe that God is their servant and only exists to grant us wishes. If He stops doing that then He deserves to be fired.

Yet the Bible tells us that Jesus was a man of great suffering and pain:

Isaiah 53:3: “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.”

If Jesus suffered then why do we expect to *not* suffer? If Jesus experienced great pain then why do we believe we have a right to live a life free from pain? Do we think that we're greater than God? Just in case we weren't sure how to answer that question, Jesus answered it for us:

John 15:20: “Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater

than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.”

Since Jesus suffered we must not object if we suffer as well, because we are *not* greater than God. It is folly to think that we have a right to a better life than Jesus did when He walked on this Earth. Yet there are many people who *do* believe this. So what does God think when men accuse Him of wrongdoing?

Job firmly believed that God had no right to do what He did – that God was wrong. So how did God respond to him? Well, there are a variety of ways He *could* have responded. We might expect God to come to Job in a still, small voice and explain what was really going on. God could have encouraged Job, told him that this was all part of a greater plan, and say that it would all soon be over and Job would be even richer than he was before. That is what we would naturally expect to happen – but that is *not* what took place. Instead God did this:

Job 38:1: “Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?
3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.”

God did not come to Job in a dream, or a vision, or a still small voice; instead God came to Job in a whirlwind. God didn't wait until Job was feeling better or in a good mood; instead God came when Job was already broken and depressed and longing for death – and God did *not* come to encourage Job or make him feel better. God did not answer any of Job's questions or tell Job what was going on. God didn't even have one encouraging thing to say to Job! Instead God condemned Job for the foolish things he said, and demanded that Job answer *His* questions.

God then asked Job a series of questions that were designed to show Job just how small, powerless, and ignorant he really was. Job thought that he knew everything – after all, he condemned God and said that God couldn't possibly have been justified in what He did. Since Job was full of pride, God humbled him:

Job 38:4: “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.”

Where was Job when God created the universe? Oh, that's right – he didn't exist. Did Job create the world? Did he fashion the sun, moon, and stars? Of course not! God was forcefully reminding Job that he was a *creature*, not the Creator. Job wasn't involved in the formation of the universe, and yet he thought he had a right to tell God that He was doing a bad job of running it.

Job also had no control over death:

Job 38:17: “Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?”

God could open the gates of death and He bring men back to life – but Job can't. Job had no power over death but yet he thought he had a right to command the God who *did* have that power. In fact, the difference between Job's power and God's power was enormous:

Job 38:31: “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of

Orion?

32 Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

33 Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?"

Job had no control over the stars or the constellations, and yet he thought he had a right to command the God who *did* have that power. Who did Job think he was? Job was most definitely *not* an all-powerful, all-knowing God, and yet he still thought God should be held accountable to him. What gave him the right to accuse God?

God demanded that Job answer him – but Job had nothing to say:

Job 40:1: "Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said,
2 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God,
let him answer it.

3 Then Job answered the Lord, and said,

4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."

In chapter 42 Job will finally repent and confess his sin, but here Job doesn't do that. So God doesn't stop. The Lord continued asking Job questions that were specifically designed to teach Job that he had no right to condemn God's decisions:

Job 40:6: "Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
7 Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?"

This is the whole problem. God was not going to back down and answer Job's questions and act like Job had a right to condemn the Lord. God did not answer to Job, nor was God the servant of Job. Job was condemning God in order to justify himself. As you can see, *this is a serious sin*. God was not going to give an inch. God has all power and knows all things, and He is justified in all that He does:

Psalms 19:9: "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

God was teaching Job that he was not all-knowing or all-powerful. Job was convinced that God was wrong to bring so much pain and suffering into his life, but Job didn't know everything. Job wasn't aware of the full situation. Job wasn't God – and yet Job was acting as if he were *greater* than God. Instead of trusting in God and submitting himself to His will, Job condemned God and demanded an apology.

Instead of apologizing, though, God demanded that Job prove he had the power of a god:

Job 40:9: "Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?
10 Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and

beauty.

11 Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.

12 Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

13 Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.

14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.”

Job had condemned God and claimed that God should be accountable to Job, so where was Job's godlike power? Where was Job's divine majesty? God told Job to *prove it* by acting like a god – but of course Job couldn't do any of those things that God listed. Job had lost all of his possessions and was in tremendous pain. He couldn't even heal himself, let alone deck himself with majesty. Job couldn't humble any proud people or defeat even the smallest wicked person. Job was utterly helpless – and God reminded him of that. God was teaching Job that *Job was not God*.

One of the great problems we have today is that so many people believe they are God. They think they have a right to condemn God, ignore God's commands, and even threaten God. They seem to think that God is a small child who can easily be bullied and ignored. *But that is not who God is*. When God came to Job He gave Job a glimpse of His divine wisdom and power – and only a fool would ignore that lesson.

God will not be mocked. The God who created the stars will one day destroy them. The God who created the world once destroyed it in a flood, and the day is coming when He will destroy it a second time with fire. Those who condemn God instead of worshiping Him will find themselves condemned. It is absolute folly to think that a person can rebuke God and force Him to change when they can't even rebuke the sun, moon, or stars. It is insanity to think that a created being is more wise and just than the infinite God who created all things.

In the end Job understood this. He repented of what he had done:

Job 42:1: “Then Job answered the Lord, and said,

2 I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

Job acknowledged that God had the right to do whatever He pleased. He confessed that he was wrong to rebuke God and he abhorred himself and repented. He was sorry for what he had done.

There is a clear lesson here in this book, if we are willing to hear it. When trouble comes into our life, are we going to trust God or condemn Him? When God tells us things that we do not want to hear and commands us to do things that we do not like, are we going to submit to the Lord who is right and just in all He does, or will we instead rebel against the Lord and try to overthrow Him?

Those who humble themselves and repent will find mercy, grace, and forgiveness. God will be with them during the hard times in life and will see them through it, and one day God will lift them up and give them everlasting joy. But those who choose to rebel against God and who fight against Him

will only find sorrow and darkness. In the end they will be cast into everlasting destruction with the rest of those who tried to overthrow the Lord.

Do not fight against God – for that is a fight you cannot win.