



## **The Mystery of Prayer**

Job 1:1-12

09.18.2022

Dave Lomas

### **Job 1:1-12**

In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East. His sons used to hold feasts in their homes on their birthdays, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would make arrangements for them to be purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's regular custom. One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. The Lord said to

Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it." Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger."

*WHY?*

"Job is a mystery. A mystery satisfies something in us, *but not our reason*. The rationalist in us is repelled by Job, as Job's three rationalist friends were repelled by Job. But something deeper in us is deeply satisfied by Job, and nourished...When we read Job we are like a little child eating spinach. 'Open your mouth and close your eyes.' Job, like spinach, is not sweet tasting. But it puts iron in your blood."

- Peter Kreeft, *Three Philosophies of Life*

### **Job 1:8-11**

Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."

"Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

Can human beings have a disinterested faith in God—that is, can humans believe in God without looking for rewards and fearing punishments? Can we love God for God?

### **Job 1:20-21**

Then Job fell to the ground in worship and said:

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb,  
and naked I will depart.

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;  
may the name of the Lord be praised.”

### **Daniel 10:2, 10-14**

At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over...He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”

There are cosmic things at stake when we pray that are shrouded in mystery.

### **Job 40:4-5**

“I am unworthy—how can I reply to you?

I put my hand over my mouth.

I spoke once, but I have no answer—  
twice, but I will say no more.”

**Job 42:2-6**

“I know that you can do all things;  
no purpose of yours can be thwarted.  
You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?’  
Surely I spoke of things I did not understand,  
things too wonderful for me to know.  
“You said, ‘Listen now, and I will speak;  
I will question you,  
and you shall answer me.’  
My ears had heard of you  
but now my eyes have seen you.  
Therefore I despise myself  
and repent in dust and ashes.”