

Five Big Questions

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Job 14:1-14

Henry T. Mahan Tape Library
Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Website: <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/13thstbap.htm>

Online Sermons: <http://mahan.sermonaudio.com>

I have a title today that should be easy for you to remember. I am going to speak to you today on the subject: Five Big Questions, Five Big Questions.

I want you, if you will, to follow in your Bibles while I read and comment on this passage of Scripture verse by verse. It is found in the book of Job, the book of Job. If you will open your Bible to the book of Job, chapter 14, this is a familiar, familiar passage of Scripture. Immediately when you open your bible there and look down you will say, "Oh, well, I have heard that before." And you have. You have read it many times. You have heard it read many time. And it is usually read at a funeral.

Generally when you read this or heard it read or hear it read it will be at a funeral. And do you remember how it begins? Look at Job 14, verse one. Remember how it begins? It says, "Man that is born of woman is a few days and full of trouble."

Well, in this Scripture I will be looking at verses one through 14. In this Scripture Job asked five big questions, five big questions.

Now, a friend said to me not long ago when I preached from this Scripture...I brought a message on this subject with these five big questions and he came up to me after the service, he had been studying the Bible for years, he said, many, many years. He said, "I have studied this Scripture and that particular Scripture many times and I have never seen those five questions before. I have just never seen them."

And it may be you haven't. But I see five questions here I want to deal with. Now, I love the book of Job. I love it. When did Job live? I don't know. I really don't know when Job lived. I asked a man that a few days ago. When did Job live?

He said, "Well, maybe during the days of Abraham."

Well, I don't know. He might have been a contemporary or Enoch or Abraham or whomever, but most agree that the book of Job is the oldest book in the Bible, older than Genesis, older than any other book in the Bible. It is the oldest book in the Bible.

Who wrote it? We don't know that either. But this man Job, the reason I love the book of Job it deals with so many subjects. And Job was a man who knew God. Job knew God.

He loved God. He believed God. How do I know that? Well, in Job one, verse eight the Lord said this. The Lord God said, "Have you considered my servant Job?" God himself called Job "my servant." Now that is enough to know that he knew God. God knew him because he was called the servant of God.

And then, secondly, God said this about him in that same verse, Job 1:8, he said, "There is none like him on the earth." That's pretty exclusive. That's one reason why I don't think he lived during the days of Abraham because he said there is nobody like him, "Nobody like my servant Job on the earth."

And I will tell you this. If there is nobody like him then God made him different. He didn't make himself different. He wasn't born different. It was an act of grace and mercy on the part of God that made him different. What do you have that you didn't receive? What do you know that God didn't teach you? So if he is different from all the other people on the earth God made the difference. For he says, over and over again, "There is no difference. All have sinned. There is no difference. All we like sheep have gone astray. There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile."

But here of Job he said, "He is different. He is my servant. And there is none like him on the earth." And then listen to what God says about him. The Lord God says, "He is a man who fears God and shuns evil." And that is some recommendation, isn't it? God himself said of this man, Job, "He is my servant and there is none like him and he fears God."

And then we have Job's own testimony found in Job chapter 19 when he said this. He said, "Oh, that my words were printed in a book." And they were, weren't they. Oh, he said, "That my words were engraved in the rock, engraved in the rock forever. Write them on my tombstone. Put them in a book, in a biography and write them on my tombstone."

What are these words that you want put in a book, Job, these words for which you want to be remembered, these words that you want on your tombstone? What are these words?

He said, "Here they are. I know that my Redeemer liveth, my Redeemer, the kinsman Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. I know he is living and that he shall stand in the latter day on this earth. And though worms destroy this body yet in my flesh I will see God whom I shall see for myself and not another. I know my Redeemer liveth."

This man knew God.

So I am interested in what he had to say. Aren't you? I'll sit at his feet. No man tested and tried like Job. And James cautions us to be attentive to this man and learn something about patience from him, learn something about a lot of things from him.

Well, Job asked some mighty important questions in these verses, mighty important, in regard to his relationship with God. And I will tell you, it is mighty important for a man to

examine himself. I know it is not very popular in this day to encourage people to examine themselves whether they be in the faith, but it is scriptural.

Peter said, "You give diligence to make your calling and election sure." It doesn't matter whether you are in the pulpit or in the pew, whether you are a doctor of theology or a doctor of medicine or whether you are an elder or a deacon or whether you are one of the people out yonder in the streets. You give diligence to make your calling and election sure. If you will do this you will never fail. "I will guarantee you," he said, "You will never fail."

"Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith." Every time we come to the Lord's table we are taught to examine ourselves and so eat of the bread and drink of the wine.

One of the old hymn writers put it this way. "Depth of mercy can there be mercy reserved for me? For me? Can my God his wrath forbear, me, the chief of sinners spare?"

Maybe the reason that question is not asked today is there are not many chief of sinners. You reckon that could be the reason? And another hymn writer, "Can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood? Died he for me who him to death pursued. Amazing love how can it be that thou, my God, should die for me?"

Do you ever wonder with amazement that the grace of God should be given to you and to me? Job did. Job did.

Let me look at these five questions. You want to take your Bible there and look at them with me? First of all, the first question follows his description of our frailty, our flesh, the brevity of this life. In verse one he says, "Man, is born of woman, born of woman." And I will tell you. Every person born of woman is destined to die. It is appointed unto that man once to die. After that the judgment. Man is born of woman and a few days. We don't live very long, do we? Seventy, 80 years, less than that. But that is not very long. And he is full of trouble, full of trouble. Trouble from within. Trouble from without. His life is a life of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower.

These little babies are so pretty. They are so beautiful. They are so fresh and young and their cheeks are so pink and they come forth like a blooming beautiful flower, you know, and they live a little while and then, you know, they are cut down. They fleeth...Man, he is born of woman, is a few days and full of trouble and he flees through this life like a shadow and continueth not. That is man, frail flesh, dying flesh.

You know, Isaiah said, "All the glory of man is like the grass of the field, like the grass that withereth." What do you do with your grass clippings? You run the lawn mower through the yard and the grass clippings off the top of the grass are thrown out of the lawn mower and you rake them up and burn them. They are no good, like a flower. It appears for a little while and then it is cut down.

And here is the question, now. When Job thinks about this frail, fleshly, corrupt, worthless body in life he says, “Oh, God, listen. Dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one?”

Here is God, eternal, man temporary. God is holy, man is sinful. God is eternal, man is just here for a short time. God is in his glory and beauty and majesty and power, man is in his frailty and flesh and weakness and sickness and disease and death.

Do you, God, do you care about things like this, these old withered flowers and these grass clippings and these weeds? Are you interested. Do you have an interest in us? Does a holy God care about such chaff that the wind blows away?

David wondered about that. David said, “When I consider the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, the things God has made,” What is man that God is mindful of him?”

That is what Job is saying here. You come out of your mother’s womb and you are here for a little while and you are nothing but flesh and blood and bones and sin and mistakes and errors and full of trouble. And you’re like a flower that is cut down and a shadow that fleeth. And he looks to God and he says, “God, do you care anything about this mess? Do you have any interest in this mess? Do you even look our direction?”

Well, an you answer it? Can you answer that question? Lord, dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one as this?

I have got the answer. I can give you one undeniable way in which I know that God is interested in some of Adam’s race, that God looks upon us and cares for us.

Do you know how I know? For God so loved this fallen world that he gave his only begotten Son. That is how I know that God looks my way. He sent Christ my way. That is how I know he is interested in me. He sent Christ to be my representative, my surety, my redeemer, my mediator. That’s how I know. “He that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?” That’s right. Romans 5:8 says, “God commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners born of woman a few days, full of trouble, coming forth like a flower and a shadow that fleeth, even when we were sinners Christ died for us. Christ died for us.”

You know, he said, “Man is born of woman is of few days.” God said, “Jeremiah, before you were born of woman, before you were formed in the belly, before you came out of the womb, I knew you. I loved you. I sanctified you. I set you apart.”

“I have drawn you,” he said in Jeremiah 31. “I have drawn you with an everlasting love. I have loved you with an everlasting love. Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.”

God’s love in Christ indicates that he does have an interest in Adam’s race.

Job, there is your answer. And I can understand why you asked it. I don't understand why everybody is not asking it. When we consider what we are and who we are, that a God of glory would even open his eyes on such an abominable site, of such a wretched, wretched sight.

All right. Here is the second question. He asked that. "Dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one?" Then he says, verse three, "And do you bring me into judgment with thee?"

This man, born of woman a few days, full of trouble, who comes forth like a flower and is cut down and fleeth as a shadow and continueth not, are you going to bring me into judgment with thee?

Now, you know, if Job had said, "God, do you bring me into judgment before thee?" I wouldn't have a problem with that. He wouldn't either because he knew that he, by all rights, should one day stand before god and be judged. The Bible says we all shall stand before the judgment seat of God.

And John, writing the last book of the Bible, he said, "I saw the dead, small and great. The sea gave up the dead. Death and Hell delivered up the dead. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." But Job didn't ask here, "Do you bring me into judgment before thee?" He should have. Without Christ he will. But what he says is, "Do you look upon such a one, open your eyes upon such a one and bring me into judgment with thee? With thee."

That is what Paul says in Ephesians two. "He hath raised us up and made us sit together with Christ. In heavenly places," not stand before him to be condemned, but seated with him to be enthroned and glorified. He prayed in John 17, "Glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." And then he said, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." With him, seated with Christ in the heavenlies.

Psalm 24 says, "Who shall ascend into the hill of God? Who shall stand in his holy place? Who? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

Do you bring me into the throne with you? With God? I tell you. A man who is not awed and amazed by all of this, knowing what he is and who God is really not knowledgeable of what he is and who God is because when you consider those two things—and this is what Job is talking about. he is talking about himself. Man is born of woman a few days, full of trouble, like a flower withered, wilted and cut down and just a fleeting shadow. And if God opened his eyes upon such a one and will actually take such a one unto himself, into his bosom and to sit with him on his throne, that's right. Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

Revelation 21:3 says, "I heard a voice out of heaven saying, 'Behold the tabernacle of God is with men.' And he will dwell with men. And they shall be his people and God himself shall be with them and be their God and they shall be his people." With God?

All right. That brings us to the third question. The thought of man dwelling with God brings Job to ask the third question. He says, "We are born of a woman by natural birth, born in sin. In sin my mother conceived me. I was shapen in iniquity and brought forth speaking lies, full of trouble, a few days." And does God intend to bring us into the throne room within the veil, into the holy of holies?

The third question in verse four says, "But who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" We are unclean. Now, who is going to make us clean? That is the question. If I stand in God's presence and ascend into the hill of God and enter the throne room into the holy of holies, I have got to be holy. Now, who is going to make me holy? Who is going to cleanse me? God is holy. We are unholy. How are we going to be made holy? Have you got the answer? Job didn't have it right here. God is just. We have sinned. How are we going to be just? God is righteous. We are unrighteous. How can we be righteous?

And somebody says, "Well, we'll just do the best we can."

But that's not what God requires. He requires perfection. The Scripture says to be acceptable it has to be perfect.

How holy does a man have to be to come into the holy of holies? How righteous does a man have to be? How holy does a man have to be? Job knew. He said in Job 15:14, "What is man that he should be clean? He that is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold, God puts no trust in his saints. The heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man who drinks iniquity like water?"

We think sin. We imagine sin. We are imperfect. Even in our...man at his best state is all together lightness and vanity. There is none good. There is none righteous.

Job said in chapter 25, verse four, "How, then can man be justified with God? How can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold, to the moon. It shines not. The stars are not pure in God's sight. How much less man who is a worm?"

So Job said, "If you are going to look my way with interest and care and then you are going to take me unto yourself and seat me with you and judge the world, how are you going to make me clean?"

Well, I have the answer. Thank God I can answer that question. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one, but the one can. He can. God can. Can the Ethiopian change his skin? No. God can. It is his nature. Can the leopard change his spots? No. It is his nature. But God can. God can. Can the sinner cleanse himself? Nope. But God can. Can I make myself holy enough for God to accept me? Nope. But God can.

Listen to 2 Corinthians 5:21. "He," Christ Jesus, "Who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness for sin in him. It is called substitution. That is what it is called, substitution. The God man Jesus Christ came down here to the earth. He

was born of a woman. He was made of a woman. He took upon himself flesh and blood and bones. He had no human father, therefore he had no inherited sin. He was conceived in the womb by the Holy Spirit, not by man. He was born without sin. And as our federal head, as our substitute, as our representative, Jesus Christ walked this earth. And what God required of us he did. What God commanded of us he performed. What God almighty required in order to be holy Jesus Christ did, always did in God's sight. And therefore in him we have this perfection.

You see, in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law that he might redeem those that are born under the law. And he, the just, died for the unjust that he might bring us to God.

That is where it is done. Are we clean? Are we holy? Are we righteous? Not in ourselves and not in our works. We are in Christ. He is our righteousness. He is our justification. He is our sanctification. He is our redemption. Everything we have we have in him. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily and you are complete in him. So in Christ we are accepted in the beloved. In Christ we are whole. Do you see that? That's the good news of the gospel.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing? Who can give us a clean record, clean books and a clean standing, perfection in God's sight? Christ.

All right. Here is the fourth question, Job 14 and verse 10. "And Job said, 'Well, man dies. And he wasteth away. Man gives up the ghost.'" Here is the question: "Where is he? Where is he?"

Job thought he would die. He was right then so sick. He was covered with boils. His health was gone. He was a dying man. He had seen other people die. He had watched them buried. He knew the body rotted. He said, "Worms destroy this body."

Now he is saying, "Well, when man dies where is he? He breathes out his breath and the body falls to the ground, becomes dust again. Where is the man? Where is he? Where is he? Do you know where he is?" I know.

In 2 Corinthians five Paul says, "If this earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, this old tabernacle, tent, be laid aside, we have a building, a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Paul said, "To be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord. I am in a straight betwixt the two, having desire to depart and be with Christ."

We go to paradise. When a person dies and this body falls to the ground lifeless that life is gone to glory. Christ said to the thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." There is no soul sleep. There is no half way house. There is no purgatory. There is no compartments. There is paradise. We go to be with God. And we have a dwelling.

Our Lord said, "In my Father's house are many dwelling places."

We have a house prepared by God awaiting our coming.

All right. The last question, verse 14. He said, "Well, if a man die, shall he live again? Shall he live again?" That man. That man, that person, that individual. Shall he live again?

Here, let me just use myself, Henry Mahan, pastor. If I died tonight and go to be with God, well, shall I live again, this person, this individual, shall I live again? Answer that and you answer all these other questions about will we know each other and all that sort of thing. Will I be me?

Well, when Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ they were Moses and Elijah. When our Lord came forth from the tomb after dying he said, "It is I."

1 Thessalonians four, Paul talks about when the Lord comes again he will bring those who sleep in Christ with him. In Revelation we praise him by saying, "Unto him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood..." Yes, we will be the same people, infinitely new. The corruption will put on incorruption, the mortal immortality, flesh will be spiritual body, but we will be ourselves.

Where is he? With the Lord. Who is he? He is his redeemed self.

All right Here is the title: Five Big Questions, Five Big Questions. You want the tape? Write for it. That other message I preached last week, Repentance and Faith, these two messages are on the same tape. We will send them to you for two dollars. Here is the address, until next week, God bless you.