

Job 10.2—Why does God contend against us?

Do not condemn me

- I. It was no small part of Job’s suffering that he was numbered with the transgressors (cp. Mt 10.25; Lk 22.37)
 - A. So Job asks the Lord that He no longer treat him as the wicked but instead vindicate his integrity before his friends and community.
 - B. He’s concerned more for God’s glory than for his own reputation. For what does it say of God’s service if this is how He treats His servants?

Let me know why you contend against me

- I. There was a thick curtain drawn between Job’s afflictions and the reason for them and Job asks God to keep it a secret no longer.
 - A. Notice what a testimony this is to Job’s faith. There’s a willingness to know his sin and, if any is pointed out, a resolve to leave it. This is evidence of the integrity and sincerity in Job of which God boasted, 1.8
 - B. So while there is infirmity in this prayer, there’s also great faith.

Reasons why God sometimes contends with us

- I. In order that He might show His own power in upholding you.
 - A. Nothing is more important in all our sufferings than that God be glorified by it. His glory is the end-all of all *He* does, which means it should be *our* end-all as well.
 - B. God loves the glory it brings Him when all can clearly see that it’s He who upholds His people in their suffering, Ps 66.6
 - 1. As a part of ensuring He gets all the glory, God tends to reveal his people’s weaknesses to the world (cf. Gen 26:7; Num 20.10; Jdg 6.11; 2Sam 11).
 - C. Sometimes God permits Satan to try them, saying “Do your worst. My servants are more than a match for you” (Job 1.8; 2.3), and then upholding them in the battle Himself (Eph 6.10-18).
 - D. And sometimes God Himself seems to come against them, casting them down with one hand while upholding them with the other (cp. Job 1.12 with v.22 and Job 2.6 with v.10)—all so that the world may know that the LORD, *He* is God.

- II. In order that He might grow your graces.
 - A. There are some graces—our most precious and Christlike graces, in fact—that would never be discovered if it weren’t for our trials.
 - 1. Faith is hardly seen in the sunshine of prosperity (Heb 11.13). Hope is a star that can only be seen in the night of adversity (Rom 8.24). And patience and perseverance can’t be seen as long as they’re overshadowed by ease and comfort (Js 1.2-4).
 - B. God takes away your comforts and contends with you in order to make you better Christians. None of us will ever grow if we’re left under the comfort of our covers.
- III. Because you have some secret sin that’s doing you a world of hurt, Rev 2-3; 1Cor 11.29-32
 - A. Sometimes the Lord meets us in the way and contends with us because we’re harboring an enemy of His in our heart (Ex 4.24). So He contends with us, calling us to cut off the hand that offends. He sets our house on fire to save our soul.
- IV. In order to humble you.
 - A. Pride will only die when we do. So it’s because we’re continually setting ourselves up that God is so continually putting us down.
- V. In order that you might share in the sufferings of His Son.
 - A. It’s pleased the Lord to set it down as a principle of the kingdom of heaven that none will ever have a share of Christ’s glory who never tasted of Christ’s sufferings, 2Cor 1.5; Phil 3.10

Directions for Responding to God’s Contentions

- I. See that you justify God in all your afflictions, Neh 9.33; Ps 119.75; Job 1.21. You may not yet know why the Lord contends with you, but you know He’s righteous in doing it.
- II. See that you do what Job does and go to God with this question. Ask it humbly, sincerely, and contentedly, but don’t stand idle before God’s rod as if you didn’t care to know what’s going on.
- III. See that you exercise a strong faith in all your sufferings because nothing will keep the sins of murmuring, impatience, pride, and atheism under your feet like a strong faith. Let your faith support your soul in all your trials by helping you learn to live upon Christ.
- IV. If the Lord’s contending with you, take heart, find out why, make the most of it, and be thankful, because it means He loves you, Heb 12.7