



# Links Players

## QUESTIONS | WHERE WERE YOU WHEN I LAID THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE EARTH?

*Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. (Job 38:2-4, ESV)*

*The ancient man approached God as the accused person approaches his judge. For the modern man, the roles are quite reversed. He [Man] is the judge: God is in the dock. He [Man] is quite a kindly judge; if God should have a reasonable defense for being the god who permits war, poverty, and disease, he is ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God's acquittal. But the important thing is that man is on the bench, and God is in the dock." — C.S. Lewis, God in the Dock.*

*"Had I been present at creation, I would have given some useful hints for the better ordering of the universe." — Alphonso the Tenth, King of Spain.*

Sometimes I get the impression that reporters are interrogating the players in the press room. It is reasonable to expect them to inquire about specific shots, pivotal moments, a player's mindset, and outcomes.

Frequently, however, skilled writers who love the game, cannot break ninety, and have no experience with the pressure of a Major, resemble lawyers in a courtroom demanding a defense from the player for his failure.

I would love to see a good-natured turnabout where the player flips the script on the reporter with his own cross-examination: 1) Do you compete in your state amateur? 2) Have you ever fallen short of expectations? 3) Can you explain the 88 you posted last week?

Something similar is happening in the book of Job. Job is a deeply righteous man with a wonderful family and enormous wealth, yet he begins to wonder if he could run God's universe a little better.

In the prologue, unbeknownst to Job, Satan accuses Job to God, arguing that Job only serves God because God has extravagantly blessed and protected him.

God disagrees and "wagers" that Job will remain loyal to Yahweh even if Job loses everything. What follows is the long and horrific story of Job experiencing unspeakable suffering and evil.

At one point, the pain becomes so unbearable that Job's wife urges, "Curse

God and die." Three close friends accuse Job of unconfessed sin, reasoning that anyone who suffers like this must have sinned against God.

Job rejects his wife's advice and adamantly disagrees with his close friends, whose theology is seriously flawed. Job's integrity remains intact, never flinching in his faith, but he begins to ask fundamental questions about God's justice.

Throughout his agonizing journey, Job demands that God appear and present a list of charges against him: "Why these evils, God?" Job's questions are not those of an atheist; rather, they are those of a devout believer.

After years of heaven's silence, God appears to Job "in the storm." The Creator confronts his creature and says, "I'll ask the questions here!" Of course, these are rhetorical questions meant to teach Job his place in the Cosmos.

God flips the script on Job, by cross-examining him with: "...I will question you...Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?"

If there has ever been a time when a man was "put in his place," this is it. Yahweh is not rebuking him for the irresistible desire to know why he has gone through unmitigated suffering.

Rather, Yahweh reminds Job that his grand design for creation and humanity's place within it are far beyond what Job or any other creature could ever know.

The gist of all that follows in God's line of questioning is that mystery [including the reality of evil] plays a significant role in the unfolding drama of history, requiring trust and reverence from creatures toward their Maker and Redeemer.

After a series of unrelenting questions by God (chapters 38-42), Job finally responds. But this time, it is not a demand that God defend his actions in allowing evil to exist.

This time, Job displays a posture of humility when he says to God, "I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know...I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

The libraries of the world cannot contain all the books written by atheists and believers alike about the "problem of evil." At the end of the day, understanding the "origin of evil" is behind the veil.

While the "pervasiveness of evil" is certainly baffling to both skeptics and devout believers, trusting that God has a greater good in the age to come comforts and strengthens the believer in their walk through this fallen world.

**Prayer: Father! Like Job, may we trust you even when we don't understand the "big picture."**

