

Questions
God
Asks



Israel Wayne

My friend Israel Wayne has a rare combination of eloquence and practical wisdom. You will be encouraged, challenged, and blessed by this innovative book.

Michael Farris, author, founder of
Patrick Henry College and HSLDA

I want to thank Israel Wayne for writing this book, *Questions God Asks*. I found this book to be challenging and encouraging. Through the questions in this book, you will have a better understanding of the faithfulness of our Lord. It speaks as to how God challenged people all through Scripture. These questions still relate to us today in our own lives. This book will bless you and will help you grow in your spiritual walk with God.

Buddy Davis, artist, musician, speaker
with Answers in Genesis

Questions God Asks is truly insightful, enjoyable, and challenging. I know of no other book that takes such a unique approach to these vital, yet often overlooked questions. A must-read!

David Ravenhill, author and Bible teacher

Israel Wayne is a fresh young voice for a timeless biblical message. This book turns the table from the questions we often ask God to the key questions of the heart that God is continually asking us. Answering them could change your life.

Byron Paulus, Executive Director
Life Action Ministries

In a day when we often hear that our questions are autonomous on the mere condition that we have them, Israel Wayne reminds us that the God who made us has some questions for us. Ours are asked in our ignorance and, at times, our rebellion. His are asked as one who ultimately knows. He knows all. He knows us. There's much to learn on a journey that starts with God's questions, and Israel is a terrific guide.

John Stonestreet, speaker, the Chuck
Colson Center for Christian Worldview and
senior content advisor for Summit Ministries

Questions God Asks is a book that will be most helpful to Christians in understanding that when God asks questions, they are meant for our edification. In this book, Israel Wayne has demonstrated that our knowledge of all things in this life is tied directly to the God of truth who has revealed Himself and His truth to us in the Holy Scripture. Each question is meant to challenge the reader to consider how we are to obey and honor our God in all that He has commanded us. That as Christians we might better understand our purpose in our salvation and the life that He has ordered for us. This is a book which is a must-read for parents and children. It is a book that will stimulate you to think and teach you to think biblically.

Dr. Kenneth Talbot, President
Whitefield College and Theological Seminary

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Introduction

In the innermost chambers of the celestial temple dwells the awesome presence of the only true and living God. Seraphim worship saying, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory” (Isa. 6:3). The thresholds shake, and the Temple in which God resides is filled with smoke. On a throne, high and exalted, sits the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the being whose breath spoke galaxies into existence. Unfathomable beauty, unapproachable light, unimaginable power, and untold wisdom belong to Him.

What kind of thoughts does a God like this think? What are His feelings? What occupies His mind? First John 3:20 informs us that God knows all things. Could a God who knows everything, who gives mankind his breath, have questions? As outlandish as it may seem to us, the Bible is filled with questions that God asks.

We ask questions when we don't understand a matter. God asks questions *because* He knows all matters infinitely. “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and unfathomable His ways!” (Rom. 11:33).

That fact alone causes us to ask more questions. There is a vast difference between us and our Creator. We are so finite, but He is so infinitely infinite. We are so foolish, but He, in His very nature, is wisdom. We don't understand

God very well. We don't even understand ourselves. God, in contrast, knows the very secrets of our hearts (Ps. 44:21). That means He knows more about who we are than we are capable of knowing. Desires and motives in our hearts, which are hidden to our view, are exposed before His piercing gaze. That is why God asks questions. It couldn't possibly be for His benefit. His probing inquiries must certainly be to assist us. "The LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts" (1 Chron. 28:9).

God doesn't throw inquiries to the wind; He aims them squarely at us. We are the target on which His interrogatory darts stick. As we examine the questions God asks, we will come to better understand our Maker — and ourselves as well. We will have to scrutinize our fundamental assumptions about God, human nature, relationships, origins, purpose, and destiny. The Judge of the universe has called us into account. We are required to explain to God things that seem beyond our understanding. The purpose isn't to condemn us, or to expose what truly miserable and wretched little imps we are. God, as a loving Father, probes our hearts and minds, plumbing the very depths of our souls to bring us into integrity (a cohesiveness and coherence) in our inmost being. May we brace ourselves for this holy cross-examination with an open and honest heart, knowing that it is for His glory and our good. It is time to stop demanding answers from God and begin answering the questions He asks of us.

Chapter 1

Where Were You?

(Origins — Job)

*“Where were you when I laid the
foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if
you have understanding.”*

— Job 38:4



Sir, would you care for something to drink?"

"Sure, I'll take an apple juice."

I guess there is no point in trying to sleep. Have you ever tried to rest inside a hollow, metal cylinder, 35,000 feet above ground, in a seat that leans slightly forward, and you can't recline because the pilot hasn't turned off the seat-belt sign yet?

I was returning from Boise to Chicago, the final leg of a week-long speaking tour. As is often the case on these trips, I was exhausted. My sister, Mercy, was with me, sitting next to a man in his 60s who was looking out the window. Mercy and I have different approaches when it comes to airplane evangelism. Her goal is to have all of the passengers on the flight on their knees repenting of their sins before we land. I'll have to admit that when I am worn out from a long trip and don't feel like talking, I suddenly become a hyper-Calvinist!

God will save those He wills, I tell myself. If they were meant to be saved they will be, if not, who am I to try to change them? In the previous two flights, Mercy had managed to have extensive counseling sessions with two ladies who were intrigued with her faith. It didn't take long before she had attempted to engage the man beside her in dialogue.

"I disassemble and repair telescopes," he informed her. "Mostly I work on really old observatory telescopes from the 1800s." Suddenly my ears perked up.

"Do you study astronomy yourself?" I asked, leaning over my sister to introduce myself.

"Why yes, I do." The man replied. "I absolutely love it."

We chatted for a while about his fascinating occupation, and then I began to question him about his beliefs. “When you study astronomy,” I began, “You can only do so because of the predictability of the orbits of the planets and the precision with which the universe operates, is that right?”

“That is true.”

“When you think about the complexity of life and the precision of math and physics, what is your explanation for how it all came to be?”

“Oh, I have studied that in great detail. *National Geographic* and *Nova* have produced some excellent video documentaries that explain how everything began with a cosmic big bang, and from there, organic life (which has always existed) evolved from simple organisms to more complex ones, until eventually it became life as we know it today.”

“So we are all just accidents?”

“Yes. Quite true. It is amazing to realize, but there is no other explanation.”

From my questioning I believe he suspected that I held to a theistic worldview. I was trying out Aquinas’ Cosmological Argument, which reasons that if something is designed, it must have a designer.

“Then why do we feel like our lives have meaning?” I inquired.

“Well, that is the deception of it all. In the end, we just die and that is all there is.”

“Do you mean to tell me that we are sitting inside a hollow metal cylinder, flying hundreds of miles an hour,

looking down upon the Rocky Mountains, expecting to arrive at an exact point of destination within five minutes of anticipated schedule, using physics and mathematics to compensate for all of the wind patterns and jet streams, and you have the mental capability to think about life's purpose and verbalize that we are nothing more than a cosmic accident, and not the result of intelligent design?"

"Yes, yes," he answered. "It is almost a miracle really, but that is how it is."

"It takes an amazing amount of faith to believe that!" I told him.

As our conversation "evolved," it became clear to me that this man, although quite intelligent, had chosen to adopt a worldview that fit his comfort level. He would much prefer to believe that his life was meaningless than to admit that there was a God to whom he was accountable. He told me that he has a Southern Baptist friend who gives him books on intelligent design and creation to read. He remains unconvinced. The reason he won't believe has nothing to do with the evidence. In spite of all evidence to the contrary, he religiously adheres to naturalism.

At one point I asked him, "Were you there at the beginning of time? Did you see the beginnings of the universe?" He conceded that he had not. "Then," I reminded him, "your belief is based on a philosophical presupposition or assumption, not on science, since you did not observe the origin of life." He wisely admitted this was true. "So," I continued, "we are both beginning on the same level.

Neither of us was there (when the universe began), so we both start with a model (creation or evolution), and we determine if the scientific evidence fits our belief system.” He agreed once again.

“The question then, is not whether we believe in faith or in science; the fact is that we both begin outside of science and can only use science for evidence, not for proof.”

These arguments are not new. They go back to the beginning of time.

As humans we desire to know why we are here and to make sense of the universe around us. This is Aquinas’ argument from meaning. Somehow, we intuitively understand that it is important what happens to us. Even the most radical Darwinist grieves at the death of their child, or rejection by someone they love. They don’t say, “Nothing more has happened than the decay of organic matter,” or “This is merely one natural force repelling from another as they collide in space and time.” No, they realize, instinctively, that life is significant.

The fact is, while we were not present when God spoke our world into existence, *He* was. The right question is not, “Does God exist?” The real question is, “Where were *you*?” When God laid out the heavens and fashioned the earth, He didn’t need our permission, and He wasn’t bound by our skepticism. The answer is that you existed in the mind of God thousands of years before you were born. When God fashioned creation, He did it with you in mind. Even if we are not mindful of God, He is mindful of us.

Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
and in Your book were all written the days that were
ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of
them (Ps. 139:16).

This planet called earth is uniquely fashioned to be able to sustain life. Your body is remarkably formed to allow you to live, move, and breathe (Acts 17:28). We will never understand all of the mysteries of creation (Eccles. 3:11).

“It is the glory of God to conceal a matter” (Prov. 25:2). But knowing that it is also the glory of kings to search out the hidden, we know that if we humble ourselves under God’s mighty hand, He will teach us what we need to know. As with Job, we can’t always comprehend or explain how or why God has worked in time and space, but we can say with him, “As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God; Whom I myself shall behold, And whom my eyes will see and not another. My heart faints within me!” (Job 19:25–27).

I don’t know all there is to know about God, but I do know Him. I can’t know truth comprehensively, but I can know truth truly. I know that He made me, He sustains my life, He has a purpose for me, and I will live with Him eternally. I know that *He* knows all things because He is from the beginning. I know Him, and that is what I really need to know.