

Questioning אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah)

As a believer in אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah), is it ok to question Him, maybe even challenge Him about what He is doing in our lives and in the lives of others?

Sometimes we look around at the world and wonder, “how can אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) be letting this happen?” Or we look at our own lives and wonder, “why would אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) put me through this?”

I’ve asked these questions many-a-times throughout my life and then quickly stopped myself. I’ve been faithfully taught, and I believe that אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) is perfectly in control and He has my best interests at heart. So am I allowed to question Him? Or should I simply accept what is going on around me and in my life?

The Model of the Psalms

David and the other Psalm writers question אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah).

They ask Him questions like:

- “Why, אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah), do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” (10:1)
- “Why have you forgotten me?” (42:9b)
- “Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?” (44:24b)
- “How long, O אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah), is the foe to scoff? Is the enemy to revile your name forever?” (74:10)

They often challenge אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) about what is going on in their own lives, the struggles they are facing and they also look around them and question why wicked men seem to flourish and אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah)’s people seem to be in trouble.

Are the Psalmists disrespectful?

The Psalmists are so open in their questioning of אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah), as we read, we began to notice a pattern. Even as they question and challenge אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) they remain convinced

of יהוה (Yahuah)'s goodness and His sovereignty over all that is happening. They often show this by finishing off the Psalm with an affirmation of יהוה (Yahuah)'s character.

Here's an example from Psalm 10.

Firstly, the Psalmist asks: "Why, O יהוה (Yahuah), do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?"

But in verse 16, he concludes by saying: "יהוה (Yahuah) is king forever and ever".

You see, while the Psalmist asks the question, He realises that יהוה (Yahuah) is in complete control and trusts Him no matter what.

Questions and answers

Despite all the questions that arise, the Psalmists continue to affirm יהוה (Yahuah)'s characteristics. Some other examples are when they talk about:

- יהוה (Yahuah)'s steadfast love (5:7, 13:5),
- The fact that יהוה (Yahuah) hears when they call out to Him (4:3, 6:9),
- How יהוה (Yahuah) will redeem His people (75:10, 91:3-6) and
- How יהוה (Yahuah) will punish the wicked (68:1-2) because He is just in His judgement (10:18, also seen in 9:4, 140:12)
- How despite their circumstances or the evil that they see around them, they will praise יהוה (Yahuah), they will tell people of the wondrous deed of יהוה (Yahuah) (22:22, 78:4)

It's ok come before Him and ask, "what are you doing יהוה (Yahuah)?" when you don't understand. But always finish off your questioning by affirming יהוה (Yahuah)'s character and His complete control over everything.

So is it ok to question אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)?

Yes! But in the right way. We're not to accuse אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) of doing wrong, or to act like we know better than him. But we're to honestly approach Him with our questions and the things that are on our heart as we seek to live for Him.

And remember, as we've seen from the Psalms, questioning אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) and trusting Him go hand-in-hand. In fact, He's the right one to ask, because He's in control. And when you do question אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah), make sure that you take an example from the book of Psalms, remember who אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) is, be reverent, honour Him and affirm the truths you know of Him.

אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) how long must I cry without your hearing? "Violence!" I cry to you, but you don't save.³ Why do you make me see wrongdoing, why do you permit oppression? Pillage and cruelty confront me, so that strife and discord prevail. Therefore Torah is not followed; justice never gets rendered, because the wicked fence in the righteous. This is why justice comes out perverted.

Psalm 10 Why, אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah), do you stand at a distance? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? **2** The wicked in their arrogance hunt down the poor, who get caught in the schemes they think up. **3** For the wicked boasts about his lusts; he Baruch (blesses) greed and despises אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah). **4** Every scheme of the wicked in his arrogance [says], "There is no Alahym (God), so it won't be held against me." **5** His ways prosper at all times.

Psalm 74 (1) Why have you rejected us forever, אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah), with your anger smoking against the sheep you once pastured?

Romans 9:20 Who are you, a mere human being, to talk back to אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)? Will what is formed say to him who formed it, "Why did you make me this way?"

Many times in Scripture we see believers questioning אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) such as Habakkuk who asks why is this evil happening? אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) later answers him and he rejoices in אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah). His question was coming from a sincere heart.

Some believe that to question אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) about your situation or his direction for you, or even אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) Himself is equal to blasphemy or, on a smaller scale, a sign of disbelief. I think it all goes back to motive. Why are we questioning אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) on some particular issue or doctrine or direction? If it is simply because we are trying to stall our obedience to אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah), then we had best quit; if it is coming from a prideful heart that says, 'I know better than אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah),' then we are wrong to question; if we question אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)'s

authority, then that too is incorrect behavior on our part.

If, however, we question because we desperately want to know the answer, because we desperately want to know who our Alahym truly is, because we need to see the light in the midst of our own confusion, then I believe it is appropriate.

I think there is a significant difference between questioning that brings wisdom and a fuller understanding of אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) and the kind of questioning that simply seeks to validate man and man's ways.

Wanting to Go אַיָּהּ (Yahuah)'s Way

First let's look at those who question as a means of understanding אַיָּהּ (Yahuah)'s ways. In **Judges 6**, we see that the Israelites had been severely oppressed by the Midianites for the past seven years. Countless times, the Midianites would ravage the crops and the livestock, leaving the countryside totally impoverished.

Then, a Malakym (angel) of אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) appeared to a prophet who happened to be threshing wheat in a winepress. His name was Gideon. Threshing wheat sounds fairly noble, but the reality was Gideon was hunkered down in a winepress because he was afraid the Midianites would see what he was doing and ransack his grain. He was undercover, so to speak.

The Malakym (angel) greets Gideon, calling him a "mighty warrior" (**Judges 6:12**). But before the Malakym (angel) can instruct Gideon in the way of אַיָּהּ (Yahuah), Gideon interrupts with a barrage of questions.

In **Judges 6:13-14** we read:

"But sir," Gideon replied, "if אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) bring us up out of Egypt?' But now אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian."

Gideon just questioned אַיָּהּ (Yahuah)'s goodness, His power, and His promises. That is pretty heavy. The amazing thing is that אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) did not chastise Gideon's questions. Rather, He answers Gideon with a task to accomplish.

Gideon is not excited about this new revelation. Why? He isn't sure that he really heard אַיָּהּ (Yahuah). Repeatedly Gideon falters when told that he is the one אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) has appointed to save Yisrael from the Midianites, and repeatedly the angel of אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) says that אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) will be with Gideon.

Eventually, a still distraught Gideon has to know for certain that אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) had truly spoken to him and that this really was the will of אַיָּהּ (Yahuah). So, he runs and puts together an offering of bread and a goat and brings them before the angel. According to instructions given by the angel, Gideon puts the meat and the bread on a rock and the angel touches the offering with Gideon's staff—and boom!—both are consumed by fire. Gideon believes.

I can think of many more examples of some very Kadosh men and women who struggled with **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s will just as much as Gideon -- Moses, Abraham, Sarah, Job, doubting Thomas, Peter, etc. And though their questioning might have made them falter and might have caused them to wait longer for a promise to be fulfilled or do the right thing, **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) was with them because He knew that when it came right down to it, these men and women desired to serve **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah). They just needed to think outside of the box. They needed to gain the right perspective. They needed a lot of encouragement.

Wanting to Go Our Own Way

There are cases when questioning is a sign of an unchanged and unrepentant heart, however. Take the case of the questioning sessions instigated by the Pharisees in the New Testament. These sessions were a means to prove **וַיְהִי** (Yahusha) wrong and validate their own desires and philosophies. How arrogant they must have seemed to **וַיְהִי** (Yahusha).

If your heart is humble before **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), not self-righteous, and if you acknowledge **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) as being the one in control with your best in mind, then don't be afraid to question, just make sure that when you ask, you are seeking for answers in the right place.

You can't question **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s will and expect him to honor it if you aren't willing to hear the answer. Listening comes in several forms, but all forms start with a submissive, Obedience and receptive heart. We must be humble before **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah).

It's one thing to ask **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) why and another thing to doubt His goodness and His existence. In confusing situations pray for wisdom and expect an answer.

Give **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) thanks daily and trust in **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) with all your heart because He knows what He's doing.

“Quit questioning **אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah) and start trusting Him!”**

Even when it may seem like **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) is not doing anything, He is working behind the scenes.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

Isaiah 55:8-9 “My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says אַיָּהּ (Yahuah). “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

1 Corinthians 2:16 For, “Who can know אַיָּהּ (Yahuah)’s thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?” But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Messiah.

Hebrews 11:6 But without Amanah (faith) it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to אַיָּהּ (Yahusha) must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Asking אַיָּהּ (Yahuah) for wisdom in a confusing situation.

James 1:5-6 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask אַיָּהּ (Yahuah), who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to אַיָּהּ (Yahuah). And the Shalom (peace) of אַיָּהּ (Yahuah), which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in אַיָּהּ (Yahusha) HaMashiach.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Chen (grace), that we may obtain mercy, and find Chen (Unmerited Favor/grace) to help in time of need.

Habakkuk 1:2 How long, אַיָּהּ (Yahuah), must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save

Habakkuk 1:3 Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds.

Habakkuk 1:5, “Look at the nations and watch and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if I told you.”

Habakkuk 3:17-19 Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the

vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in יהוה (Yahuah), I will be joyful in יהוה (Yahuah) my Savior. The Sovereign יהוה (Yahuah) is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.

Jeremiah 1:5-8 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” Then I said, “Ah, יהוה (Yahuah)! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.” But יהוה (Yahuah) said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares יהוה (Yahuah).”