

Eight Ways God Answers Prayers

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From: EC6 Eight ways God answers prayers

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Eliminating the frustration of prayers not granted

One of the most common frustration-comments about prayer is the failure to receive answers. Have you had this experience? Have you been frustrated or disappointed?

When you consider the implications of being frustrated and disappointed with the lack of prayers, you might never want to feel that way again. When you are frustrated with the lack of answers to your prayers, you are frustrated with how God is responding to you, or not responding. When you are disappointed with the lack of answers to your prayers, you are expressing disapproval with God's response.

Do you feel that way? Do you think it is right to be disappointed in God and the way He does things? Do you think it is right to critic God and complain about how He answers your prayers?

I doubt you have those intentions. It is shocking to think that someone might feel qualified to critic God and find fault with the way He does things. There are some who do complain. And there are some who blame God for failing them for not doing as they requested.

There is an easy remedy to this frustration. The solution is to humble yourself to God. Believe that He knows best and always does the best thing. Confess your lack of wisdom and qualifications to judge God. With this attitude, you can accept God's answers and eliminate all your frustrations about praying.

Eight ways God answer prayers

The truth is that God answers every prayer request. He has heard every prayer and has known how He will respond to every prayer before He created the world and long before you were born.

The frustration people struggle with is not the lack of an answer from God. They struggle with accepting His answer.

Below are 8 ways God might answer prayers, but there are more.

The answer is no.

The answer we hope *not* to hear is No. I am not going to list the reasons why God says no. Rather, I am going to give one example of God saying no to a devout man in the Bible. He was not being denied because of sin. He was not being denied because He was failing to serve God. He was the Apostle Paul. And Paul is known as one who served God with all his heart, soul, and mind. Yet God told him no.

In Second Corinthians 12:7–9 Paul writes, “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

If God said no to the Apostle Paul, why should we expect more? Paul was a great man of God. His request was to be freed from a difficulty that would help him focus on his ministry. He would have been able to minister to people better, and it would have been easier to fulfill his responsibilities to God. But God said no. There is something that God knows that we do not know.

God knows best. He knows that the best answer to give Paul was no. If He answers your request with a no, then be assured, it is the best answer.

The answer is no, not yet.

First Samuel 1 tells the story of a woman named Hannah who prayed for a child. Year after year the Lord did not grant her request. And then, He said yes. Up until that time, He had said no, not yet.

Likewise, in the Lord’s prayer we are told to pray, “Thy kingdom come.” It has not come yet. Would it not be better for us to be in heaven free from worries, diseases, heartaches, and other sorrow? But God knows it is best to delay His coming until later. He wants us to pray for His kingdom to come, but His answer up until now has been no, not yet.

The answer is yes.

An example of God saying yes to a prayer request is found in 1 Chronicles 4:9–10. “And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.”

There is nothing unique about Jabez’s prayer. It was a prayer that has been offered to God by many on many occasions. It is a prayer that God desires to bless everyone with. Jesus instructed His disciples to pray that they not be led into temptations, but delivered from evil. Many repeat the Lord’s prayer for this very thing.

But God does not grant this request for everyone in this life, not even for the disciples. As we know, the disciples were persecuted for their testimonies in the Lord. But their reward in heaven more than fulfills their requests.

Was Jabez more honorable than Peter or Paul, John the Baptist or the beggar who sat at the gate of the rich man's house? They were all saved and honorable in the eyes of God. But in response to Jabez's prayer, God said yes.

The answer is Yes, and More than you asked for.

First Kings 3:5, "In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon asked in verse 9, "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" This was a humble and unselfish prayer request. Solomon asked nothing for personal benefit.

In verses 11 – 12 "God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee."

God granted Solomon's request. But then He went further and said in verse 13, "And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days." Not only did God grant Solomon his request, He granted Solomon much more.

The answer is Yes, right now.

King Hezekiah was blessed with a quick response. Second Kings 20:1 says, "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD."

Loud and clear

Second Kings 1:9 says, "Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down. And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly. And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty."

Soft and quiet

Sometimes the prayers are answered, and we do not recognize the answers. Psalm 25:4 “Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.” We discover after the fact, the wisdom and guidance that God has given.

Despite ourselves

One last response I want to include is a perspective answer. This refers to the perspective we should have when God answers our prayers. Regardless of God’s answers to our prayers, it is always in spite of ourselves, but always for good.

Ro 8:26–28, “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what [is] the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to [the will of] God.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose.”

Three steps to accepting every answer from God.

Humble yourself before God.

Trust Him.

Ask, leave it in God’s hands, and rejoice.

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