

God Answers Every Prayer

“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews”
(Acts 12:5, 11).

To human eyes and understanding it was an impossible situation. James had already been killed. Peter was in prison. Sixteen soldiers kept watch over him. Peter’s case looked hopeless. He too would soon be killed. However, the church met the bleak situation by calling a prayer meeting. They knew that prayer was their only hope and that “...the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16).

The church gathered together and began to pray without ceasing. Their prayer was soon to be answered and they didn’t even expect it. As you read through Acts 12, you have to smile when you realize that they didn’t even recognize the answer to their prayers when it came. How many times have we prayed for something and not even believe that God was going to answer our prayers? But, God answers every prayer.

Throughout the Gospels Jesus never mentioned “unanswered prayer.” He proclaimed boldly that prayer is always answered.

“Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened” (Matt. 7:7-8).

“If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it” (John 14:14).

You receive an answer to prayer each time you ASK:

- ✓ **A** **Ask**
- ✓ **S** **Seek**
- ✓ **K** **Knock**

God always gives the correct answer to prayer. He may not answer like you want Him to, but he will always answer in the way that is best for you.

The Answers God Gives to Prayer

No

When what you are praying for is not in the will of God, then God will say “no” as an answer to your prayer. There are two other hindrances in prayer. They are sin and unbelief. Many times unbelief will keep people from prayer.

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts” (James 4:3).

We should not request things as a result of our selfish desires. However if we ask, in the will of God, He promises that He will hear us. His answer to our prayer becomes “yes.”

Yes

“And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him” (1 John 5:15).

Jesus prayed, “...Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

Any prayer that is based on the promises of God will be effective and answered.

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoke, and shall he not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19).

“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (2 Corinthians 1:20).

“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not” (Jeremiah 33:3). If we don’t call, He will not answer.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end” (Jeremiah 29:11).

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matthew 21:22).

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

“And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform” (Romans 4:21).

Wait

Sometimes the timing is not right for the prayer to be answered.

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...”
(Ecclesiastes 3:1).

One man has said, “God’s delays are not God’s denials.” Delayed answers to prayer are not the same as unanswered prayer. God answers every prayer. Cornelius in Acts 10 prayed until his prayers came up as a memorial before God. God kept putting His prayers in the “Wait File” until the timing was right. Up until then His answer had been, “Wait for the correct time! Be patient!”

Stop

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psalm 66:18).

Sometimes we pray and God asks us to “stop” and make certain things right. God wants our relationship to be right with him before He will answer our other prayers.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

God also wants to make sure that our relationship with others is correct before He gives us a “Yes!” answer.

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee: Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matthew 5:23-24).

The Rest of the Story

Peter was fast asleep. He did not wake easily. A light filled the room and he partially woke up when the angel hit him on his side, and lifted him up. The angel had to lead the sleepy man of God each step of the way and gave him instructions of what to do. The chains were loosed, they passed the guards on duty, and the iron gate swung open.

Peter decided to go to the house where prayer was being made. The people would be so excited that their prayer had been answered. A young girl named Rhoda answered Peter’s knock at the gate. When she heard his voice she rushed to tell the other prayer warriors that Peter was at the gate. “You are mad!” they replied. When she persisted they claimed, “It is his

angel!” The prayer warriors had resigned themselves to Peter’s soon death. She kept interrupting their prayers. Peter kept knocking. The church was so taken up with praying for an answer that they left their answer knocking at the gate.

A Word From the Wise

“The Lord answers all prayer. Knowing so much more than we do, He grants some, refuses others, and delays still others. A delay is an answer! To have what He wants for us without His timing would be disastrous. Often the answer we’ve been praying for is staring us in the face...There are times when we are so intent on praying that the prayer is all talking and no listening. The answer is knocking!” (Acts Commentary, Lloyd Oglivie)

Study Questions

1. What does James 5:16 say about the “righteous man”? _____

2. How many prayers does God answer? _____

3. What does “A. S. K.” mean? _____

4. Why would God say “No” to some prayers? _____

5. What did Jesus pray in Matthew 6:10? _____

6. Why does God ask us to “WAIT” sometimes? _____

7. Provide two Scriptures that show us that Jesus will fulfill His promises. _____

8. What does Psalms 66:18 say? _____

9. Why does God ask us to “STOP”? _____
