

Does God answer prayer?

By

Biblword

Living with God › Prayer

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Those of us who believe in God, believe that He hears our prayers, but do we all believe that He answers them? Actually He does – in His own way and on His own time. It may not be exactly the answer we want, and we may wonder if He really loves us. But in time we will realize that the way He has answered our prayer has been what is best for us.

Not the answer we expect

The prophet Habakkuk wondered whether God really loved the nation of Judah where the powerful were deeply involved in sin and corruption. They were oppressing the poor and powerless and God seemed to be doing nothing about it. In Habakkuk 1:2, Habakkuk asked the following of the Lord: “How long, O LORD, will I call for help, and You will not hear?”

At some point in our life we may have asked the same question. God did answer Habakkuk, but it was not the

answer he expected. God's solution to the sin of Judah was to have them invaded by the ruthless Babylonians. Habakkuk complained saying that was overkill, but God assured Habakkuk that He would also deal with the Babylonians (Habakkuk 1:12–2:20). In the end Habakkuk acknowledged that God is sovereign. He is good and whatever happens we can trust in Him:

“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 the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights” (Habakkuk 3:17-19).

The ways God answers prayer

It is generally accepted that there are three ways God answers prayer: ‘Yes’, ‘No’ and ‘Wait’.

Yes

‘Yes’ is the answer we crave for. And it is always the answer when we ask God to forgive our sins in Jesus’ Name. All believers can testify to the many times God has answered prayers in the positive – be it for help to locate a misplaced object, the request for Him to step in during a difficult situation, the request for healing, protection etc.

No

‘No’ is the answer we least want to receive. Nevertheless it’s still an answer. We may not understand God’s answer at that moment. But in time we will realize there is a purpose when God says ‘No’. A good example is the prayer request for limbs made by Nick Vujcic who was born without limbs. When God’s answer was ‘No’, Nick was so disappointed that he wanted to commit suicide. However, God has used him to show that there is greater worth in Jesus than in having limbs. Nick now knows why God said ‘No’ to him.

Wait

‘Wait’ is also a tough answer to receive from God. When this happens, we need to remind ourselves that God is in

control and can certainly handle our situation. We need to allow Him to continue working in whatever way He sees fit. We cannot go ahead of Him and try and do things our way. Instead we must truly be patient and wait on God's timing.

Even though Habakkuk couldn't see it, God was working the whole time. He is doing the same in our lives as His followers. He is sovereign over all the details of our life. God indeed does answer prayer.

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