

"Why are Prayers Not Answered!"

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: (Psalms 66:18 KJV)

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Luke 13:35b KJV)

"The average man's idea of a good sermon is one that goes over his head and hits a neighbor."



How many here believe in prayer?

Have you ever wondered why your prayers are not answered or your prayers are not answered the way you think they should be answered. When you get right down to it, and you think about it, God always answers prayer. He may be saying "yes" or "no" or He may be saying, "Not Now my Child," "Wait for my timing, I know best for you."

**What is prayer anyway? According to the dictionary, Prayer is: "An act of communion with God, a god, or another object of worship, such as in devotion, confession, praise, or thanksgiving."¹ This is a broad definition for prayer since it includes, I believe, other gods and not only the True God, The Creator God. But remember, this was a secular dictionary and not a Christian dictionary. But what else would you expect for the definition of prayer from a worldly view. But, we know as Christians, that prayer is a direct communion with the one and only true God, in the name of Jesus Christ. (Yeshua)
Our true God is the Great "I AM," as described in Exodus 3.**



Simply put; Prayer is talking with God. Prayer is that direct line that

allows us to communicate with God. Open 24/7, God never closes. He wants us to communicate/talk to Him. This is the way we receive our guidance for all our decisions. Let us look at

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Proverbs 16:9; *The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.* (Pro 16:9 NASB)

Basically there are two ways that we mainly communicate with our Creator, the reading of “His Word, the Bible,” and our “Prayer Life” with Him. There is nothing complicated about it as some people may imply. You can talk to Jesus (Yeshua) because He is always there and He always understands your needs as no one else can. After all God created each one of us, so who would know us better? Paul tells us to come to God with boldness, knowing that we have access through faith. Just look at Ephesians 3:12; *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.* (Eph 3:12 KJV) The author of Hebrews tells us to come boldly to the throne of grace; *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* (Heb 4:16 KJV) As we pray and talk to God we begin to understand what prayer is all about. A good way to start prayer is, “let everything else go and just start praising God. When reaching out to prayer we are to come into God’s presence with gladness as the Psalmist says and repeats in Acts 2:28; *‘YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.’* (Act 2:28 NASB)

Many believe that prayer is God’s prescribed method of asking Him for things. Others believe that prayer is simply communication with God. Still others believe that prayer is a way to learn God’s will. Reducing prayer to any one of these (or any others number of descriptions) misses the most



important part of why God has ordained that prayer should be regularly employed by His people. Prayer isn’t for God’s sake, it’s for ours. You see, God can do without us, but we can’t do without God.

Prayer is not about changing the circumstances, it's about changing us. Prayer does indeed change things; it changes us, and a changed us, changes everything else, especially the way we view God.

Quoting from "Does prayer change anything" article by Eric Rauch.

Prayer is not magic. God is not a celestial bellhop ready at our beck and call to satisfy our every whim. Sometimes the immature Christian suffers bitter disappointment, not because God failed to keep His promises, but because well-meaning Christians made promises for God that God Himself never authorized. There is more to receiving what we desire from God than the mere asking. Trust in God is not enough. There must be proper reverence



for God, obedience to His will and an ongoing communion with Christ. In some cases, our prayers must involve travail of the soul and agony of heart such as Jesus Himself experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane. Let us look at those verses in Matthew 26, starting with verse 36-44.

*Then Jesus *came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and *said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." (Mat 26:36 NASB)*

And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. (Mat 26:37 NASB)

*Then He *said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." (Mat 26:38 NASB)*

And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." (Mat 26:39 NASB)

*And He *came to the disciples and *found them sleeping, and *said to Peter, "So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? (Mat 26:40 NASB)*

"Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Mat 26:41 NASB)

He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done." (Mat 26:42 NASB)
Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. (Mat 26:43 NASB)

And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. (Mat 26:44 NASB)

Jesus (Yeshua) always prayed, aligning Him up with His Father, He's the example for us. We are to pray for the will of the Father for us.

~Holiness~

The Psalmist brings up the subject of God's holiness in Psalms 99:5: Holiness is another requirement for answering of prayer. *Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy. (Psa 99:5 KJV)*

God tells us that we should live in holiness in I Peter 1:14-16. Let us look at this set of verses; *As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. (1Pe 1:14-16 KJV)*

If holiness is not important, why is God holy and why does He commands us to be holy? How are we to be holy? Well one way that we want to cover today is PRAYER, our direct communication with Jesus Christ. (Yeshua) We can talk to Him anytime and as many times as we want to. He can console us, guide us; lead us into His spiritual will for us. How can we know Him if we don't commune with Him on a daily basis? That is how we get to know Him! It's like I know people, I know most of you in here, but the more I'm with you and the more I talk to you, the better I get to know you and the more I know about you. Well it's the same way with God. There is no shortcut for time spent with God. You have to spend the time with God in order to get to know Him. I'm talking about quality time!




“Answer to Prayer Requires Preparation!”

A rather lazy student noticed that a fellow student always recited her lessons well, so he said to her, "How is it that you always say your lesson so perfectly?" She replied, "I always pray that I may say my lessons well." "Do you?" said the boy somewhat surprised. "Well, then, I will pray, too." However, the next morning he could not even repeat a word of his assigned lesson. Perplexed, he ran to his friend and reproached her as deceitful. "I prayed," said he, "but I could not say a single word of my lesson." "Perhaps," rejoined the other, "you didn't study hard enough!" "I didn't study at all," answered the boy. "I thought I didn't have to study after praying about it."

Today, I better get on with the subject. I want to give you these seven reasons that God may not be answering your prayers. I grant you that there are many more that are uncovered, but we will be dealing with only seven today. Just, why is God, not hearing and not answering? As we go over them, how many or which ones will apply to you? If your prayers or words are bouncing off the ceiling perhaps there is something standing in the way.

#1 ~INIQUITY~

One of the most obvious explanation for unanswered prayer may be “known sin” in our life. The King James calls it “iniquity” in the heart. The NASB calls it “wickedness” in the heart. By whatever you want to call it, it’s




known sin. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:* (Psa 66:18 KJV) The term “iniquity” literally means “lawlessness,” a total disregard for the precepts of the Bible. A person who totally dismisses the Bible will not hear from God and their prayer will go unanswered. It’s a known sin that you have not repented of.

There are many good verses in the New Testament concerning repentance. One that comes to mind is Mark 6:12. *And they went out, and preached that men should repent.* (Mark 6:12 KJV) And another good verse is, as there are many, is also from the book of Mark, from the words of Jesus

(Yeshua) himself, “*And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*” (Mark 1:15 KJV) We are all sinners in the need of a Savior. When we confess our sins, we don’t just say; “Please Jesus forgive me for all my sins.” This won’t quiet get it; we need to individually list all our sins, repent and move on. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* (2Co 5:17 KJV)

#2~DOUBT~

Do you, when you pray have any doubts about God hearing you. Jesus tells us in Matthew 21:21-22; *Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.* (Mat 21:21 KJV) *And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.* (Mat 21:22 KJV) Then the author of Hebrews tells us a little about faith, it says; “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*” (Heb 11:6 KJV)

Doubt is the opposite of faith, and what is faith according to the Bible; *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.* (Heb 11:1 NASB) The Bible also tells us that we cannot please God without faith and then we turn again to Hebrews 11:6. *And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.* (Heb 11:6 NASB) The book  of James puts it this way; *But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.* (Jas 1:6 NASB)

The Psalmist seems to always have a take on prayer. Look at Psalms 5:3;

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. (Psa 5:3 KJV) And then we have Psalms 17:6; *I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech. (Psa 17:6 KJV)* The Psalmist is not speaking to God with doubt! The Psalmist says that he will direct his prayer to Him and asking that God to hear his speech and will look up to heaven for an answer.

“Doubt your doubts before you doubt your beliefs.” Walt Allmand

#3~FAITH~

A number of people think that God is motivated by the wants of a person and therefore will answer prayer based on wants. If this was true then each person with a desire would be instantly fulfilled? Everything is wanted instantly today, even prayer. It is true that God will supply all our needs. Let us look at Philippians 4:19; *And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Php 4:19 NASB)* And then James has something to say about faith;

and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

(Jas 5:15 NASB) As discussed above, faith is the opposite of doubt; you either have faith or doubt.



When something bad happens, don't just throw out a few brief prayers for God's help, and then move on in discouragement if the situation doesn't change for the better. God wants you to wrestle with Him in prayer.

#4~UN-FORGIVENESS~

Do you have a un-forgiveness in your heart against someone else? If you do, you need to repent and seek forgiveness. God cannot hear you, for we are to be a clean vessel for Him. A grudge of un-forgiveness will paralyze even the smallest plea. Jesus even spoke of this in Matthew 6; *"For if you forgive*

others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

"But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. (Mat 6:14-15 NASB) It's a two-way street, God forgives you and cleanses you from your sins, and then you are to forgive others. I don't mean you can forgive sins as God does, but you are to forgive in your heart your brothers and sisters, even if they have done you wrong.

"He that does not forgive, burns the bridge over which he himself must pass," for the Lord hath said, *And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. (Mar 11:25 KJV) But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. (Mar 11:26 KJV)*

#5~UNBELIEF~

Unbelief in your prayer life can sometimes cause your prayer or petition not to be answered. Do you believe what you are praying about is in accordance to God's will for our life? Are you and God in alignment with each other? Just remember, our Father in heaven always knows best. Do you pray the same prayer over and over again without believing that God is hearing? Jesus addresses this situation in the Gospel of Matthew; *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. (Mat 6:7-8*



KJV) In the next few verses Jesus (Yeshua) lets us know how to pray with a simple prayer. Listen to how Jesus (Yeshua) gives us instructions on how to pray.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And

lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

(Mat 6:9-13 KJV)

“Never put a question mark where God has put a period.” John R. Rice

#6~**DISUNITY**~

Do you have disunity in the family? This can cause a hindrance to your prayers being answered! When there is harmony in the family, we please God. When we have unity in the family life, stress is a lot less and prayers will be answered. The Apostle Peter addresses this unity and prayer. *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.* (1Pe 3:7 KJV)

Disunity between spouses destroys a marriage and impedes spiritual growth. “Nothing flatters a man as much as the happiness of his wife. He is always proud that he is the source of it.”

Remember the saying; “When the woman of the house is not happy, no one else is happy.”

#7~**WRONG MOTIVES**~

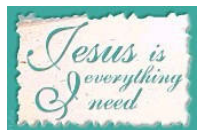
Are we asking and praying to God for the right motives? The Bible explains it as asking for our own selfish motives; the King James talks about your lust; In James 4:3 it says; *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.* (Jas 4:3 KJV) and the New American Standard Bible tells us that our motives are our own pleasures; *You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.* (Jas 4:3 NASB) This selfishness for our own lust and pleasures must be overcome. We are and need to get back into the will of God. As you can see, we are to be a clean vessel for Jesus (Yeshua) before we come before Him.



We don't live in a perfect world, not yet anyway. But a lot of Christians believe that we do and they should receive all they want. Sometimes God does things in this imperfect world to display His works. Such as in John 9: 1-5; *As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work. "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."*

(John 9:1-5 NASB)

James wraps it up in a few verses on how we can connect with life. Look at James 5:13-16; *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (Jas 5:13-16 KJV)* I guess you have heard the sayings: "When we work, we work! When we pray, God works."



Let God work a miracle in your life.

“Amen!”

A layman who was widely known for his use of the term "amen," was asked on one occasion why he used it.

"Just what does 'amen' mean?" asked a friend.

The sincere brother replied, "In most cases it means just this to me: Yes, Lord, I am with it, and I will stand my share of the expenses.

"What do you mean when you say 'amen' at the end of your prayers?" he was asked.

"When I say 'amen' at the end of a prayer I mean just this: 'God, I am working with you that this may be true, but I am willing to receive any one of your three replies: yes, no, or wait.'"

"Never Found Time"

*I knelt to pray, but not for long.
I had too much to do.
Must hurry off and get to work,
For bills would soon be due.*



*And so I said a hurried prayer,
Jumped up from off my knees,
My Christian duties now were done,
My soul could be at ease.*

*All through the day I had no time
To speak a word of cheer,
No time to speak of Christ to friends,
They'd laugh at me I feared.*

*No time, no time, too much to do,
That was my constant cry;
No time to give to those in need -
At last was time to die.*

*And when before the Lord I came,
I stood with downcast eyes;
Within His hands He held a book -
It was the "Book of Life."*

*God looked into His book and said,
"Your name I cannot find,
I once was going to write it down,
But never found the time."*

I have gotten information for this article from a number of different sources; From God, internet, Bibles,



ictionaries, and study materials from several different authors, etc. I do not take full credit for these writings since there are many. I did not in some cases keep up with this information in order to give proper credit. Credits will sometimes be in the above writing. My comments, writings and rewriting of the sources are in this article. I therefore cannot take full credit for this writing. The full credit would have to go to Jesus Christ, the creator of all things.

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October 2010

Dewey E. (Obad) Fox, Bond Servant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
