

## When God Answers Prayer

It is indeed a true blessing to be able to talk to God through prayer at any time we desire (Psalm 34:15, 17a; 1 Peter 5:6; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17). Like any good father, God wants us to be comfortable going to Him with requests (Philippians 4:6; Matthew 7:7).

So often when we don't get what we desire, we feel like God has not answered our prayer. But that is not true! God answers prayers in a variety of different ways.

### I. Sometimes He will say yes (Luke 11:5-13).

A. Consider the examples the Bible gives us:

1. Solomon was given wisdom (1 Kings 3:5-10).
2. Hannah was given a son (1 Samuel 1:9-18).
3. Hezekiah was blessed with deliverance from the Assyrians (2 Kings 19:14-37).
4. Samson was blessed with his strength back one last time (Judges 16:28-31).
5. Elijah prayed it wouldn't rain, and it didn't for three years in Israel (1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17-18).

B. Have you ever had God bless you with something you ask for through prayer?

1. We all have! When this happens we need to be different than the nine lepers who neglected thanking Jesus for blessing them (Luke 17:11-19).
2. Instead we need to be like Hannah (2 Samuel 2:1-11).

### II. Sometimes He will say no.

A. Consider the examples the Bible gives us:

1. Paul's thorn in the flesh was not removed (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).
2. The "cup" was not removed from Jesus (Luke 22:43; Hebrews 5:7). Instead He was given the strength to drink it.
3. If God would not answer every request from Jesus with a "yes," what makes us think He will deal with us any different?

B. Why does this sometimes happen?

1. Sometimes what we ask for is not in our best interest.
2. It doesn't mean that God has not heard our prayer. It just means that the answer is different than we may want.
3. This is why it's critical that we always pray for the Father's will to be done (Matthew 6:10; Luke 22:42).

### III. Sometimes He will say yes, but not right now.

A. Consider the examples the Bible gives us:

1. Joseph (Genesis 37-45)
2. Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 15-21)

B. This challenges us...

1. To be persistent in our prayers (Luke 18:1-8).
2. To have patience (2 Peter 1:6).
3. To trust God (Proverbs 3:5-7).

**Conclusion:** Prayer is how we access the power of God in our lives (James 5:16). The only thing that will keep God from hearing and responding to our prayers is sin (Isaiah 59:1-2)!