

WHY GOD OFTEN DELAYS IN ANSWERING PRAYER

Isaiah 30:18

Introduction: Just about every Christian has prayed seriously, even desperately, for God to do or not do certain things and received only silence from God. Why does God tell us to ask, believing, and He will grant our prayer, and then not grant what we ask for?

We are not the ones who have asked God for something and God either delayed or never granted the prayer.

- Jacob did not get the blessing from the angel until near dawn of the day - he had to wrestle for it all night.
- The poor woman of Syrophenicia was not answered a word for a long while.
- Remember Paul's "thorn in the side?" He prayed at least three times that God would remove it, but received no word that it would be taken away, but instead received a promise that God's grace would be enough for him.

Why do we knock, ask, and believe but have not received an answer? Why hasn't our Heavenly Father granted our prayers?

Our Heavenly Father has reasons peculiar to Himself for keeping us waiting or not granting our prayers.

- Sometimes it is to show His power and his sovereignty, that others may know that He has the right to give or to withhold.
- Most often the delay is for our own good.
- Often we are kept waiting in order that our desires may be more fervent for God knows that delay will quicken and increase our desire and we will see the necessity more clearly and thus seek more earnestly, therefore value that answered prayer more because of the delay in obtaining it.
- But there might be something wrong within us which needs to be removed before the joy of answered prayer is received.
 - Perhaps our view or attitude of certain scripture are confused and not as they should be.
 - Maybe we may be relying on our own abilities instead of simply trusting completely and entirely in our Lord Jesus.
- God may make us wait while He may more fully display the riches of His grace to us.

Our prayers are heard in Heaven and whether they are granted immediately, later, or never, they are certainly never forgotten or misplaced. But sooner or later our prayers will be granted to our delight and satisfaction or we will come to understand why they were not.

Let us not become disappointed or tend to slow down or even stop praying because no immediate answer to our requests comes. Let us continue even more earnestly in asking of our gracious Lord, learning to leave the when/why/how to His discretion.