

THE BIBLE VIEW

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What Praying Really Means

Gleaned from [Prayer: Asking and Receiving](#) by John R. Rice

When one understands that God hears and answers prayer, then he can faintly perceive all the attributes and the nature of God. All the other qualities, attributes, or characteristics of God are implied when we understand that He answers prayer.

1. A prayer-hearing God is a living God. He is not an idol of wood, stone, or paper.
2. A prayer-hearing and prayer answering God is an all-knowing God.

Does God hear the cry of millions of His people in all countries, in all languages, and at the same time? Does He even know the hearts of the suppliants? Does He see their faith? Does He know the sincerity, or perceive the hypocrisy in the hearts of those who pray? Then He is a limitless God who knows all things!

3. If God is able to answer prayer, then He has all power in Heaven and on earth. If God answers prayer for rain, then He must control the weather. If God answers prayer about crops, He must have control of the sun, insects, moisture, and even the germ of life in

the seed itself.

Does God answer prayer about health? Then God must have in His hand every corpuscle of the blood, every nerve, and every process in the human body!

Does God answer prayer about revival, or about the conversion of a sinner? Then God must have influence on the very souls and consciences and wills of men! If God answered the prayer of Joshua so that the sun stood still in its relation to the earth for a day (Josh. 10:12-13), then God controls the whole infinite universe. He answers prayer. He has infinite and limitless power.

4. If God answers prayer and has such infinite wisdom, then He himself must be the Creator
5. The God who answers prayer is a miracle-working God. To believe that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him means that one has faith in all that is ever claimed for God. If there is a God who hears and answers prayers, then His work is miraculous and supernatural.
6. If God answers prayer, then He is a God of infinite love and mercy! God knows that none of us deserves to have our prayers answered. We poor sinners deserve only condemnation, forsaking, and punishment; but God loves sinners anyway! ...

... When one really believes that God is a prayer-hearing, prayer-answering God, he has the secret to the very heart of God, and can dimly see all the graces, powers, and

majesty of the infinite God! A God who hears and answers prayer is a true God. Any “god” who does not hear and answer prayer has not the power and the grace to create, support the world, or to love, seek, and save lost sinners.

With these things in mind, we can understand how God longs to be known by the title, “O thou that hearest prayer!” and how no one can please Him and no one can come to Him, without believing that He is a God who hears and answers the prayers of those who diligently seek Him!

“Between the humble and contrite heart and the majesty of heaven there are no barriers; the only password is prayer.” — *Ballou*

“But”

Bill Brinkworth

Peter’s future did not look too promising as he lay in a dark, dank prison cell. Acts 12 describes his unpleasant position further by detailing that he was chained to guards on either side of him, was unclothed, was locked in a prison with other security outside his chamber, and was facing a death sentence from Herod. No one would have ever suspected he would leave that jail alive. Then a hopeful word came into the story. It is a word that usually indicates that things are going to change. The word is “but” (Acts 12:5), and the situation did change.

Things changed in Peter’s gloomy situation, because those praying got God involved. The impossible was made possible. Guards were not disturbed; however, shackles

fell off the prisoner. An angel got involved, and prison doors flung open on their “own” account. Out walked Peter, a free man!

Just as things got changed for Peter when others started praying, then things can change today when God’s people also seek His help. Sick people have been cured by God’s answering prayer. Fearful, dangerous situations have been changed to peaceable ones, when petitions were sent to our heavenly Father. Drunken, runaway parents have had their lives changed and salvaged by the prayers of their loved ones. Continuous supplications have gotten God involved in putting marriages back together. Prayer prompted God to do miracles at jobs, to help financial situations, to mend relationships, fix broken things, and countless other “hopeless” situations.

For the Christian, calling on God in prayer can change any situation. It should be our first line of defense in battling the troubles we face in this life. There is always hope, when God is involved. There is nothing God cannot do, when a Christian calls on his Father for help!

“Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue.” — *Green*

A Butterfly Used to Answer Prayer

H. A. Ironside

“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?” Jeremiah 32:27

Evangelist Mr. H. P. Barker told an interesting story of a poor woman who was being pressed by a tradesman to pay an account which she knew she had already settled. He demanded that she produce a receipt. Quite certain she had received one, she hunted and hunted, but was absolutely unable to find it. She went through piles of papers and letters, but to no avail — the receipt was not forthcoming.

Finally, the tradesman came to her again and made a very angry demand upon her for immediate payment. In her distress, she turned to the Lord in earnest prayer, asking Him to bring the receipt to light. Then in a moment or two, a butterfly flew into the room through an open window, and her little boy, eager to catch the beautiful creature, ran after it.

The frightened insect flew over to the wall on one side and down behind a trunk. The boy in his eagerness to catch it, pushed out the trunk, and there, behind it on the floor lay the missing receipt! Snatching it up triumphantly, the poor widow showed it to the tradesman, who went away discomfited. As his own handwriting declared, the debt had been paid.

Who can doubt that God who notes the sparrow's fall, and who would have us learn lessons from the ant and the coney and other small creatures, directed even the movements of a butterfly in order that He might answer His handmaiden's prayer!

“And Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees.”

— Cowper

“The Lord Heareth”

Walter Knight

A lifeguard sits all day on the beach watching for persons needing his help. All about him is the noise of hundreds of pleasure-seekers, talking, laughing, shouting, and the waves roar loudly. There are noises everywhere.

“I don’t see how, “ queried a man one day, “you can hear a cry for help when someone out in the water needs you.”

“No matter how great the noise and confusion,” replied the guard, “I have never had an occasion when I could not distinguish the cry of distress above all other sounds.”

The gentleman went away thinking about this, and reflected that it is a lot like that with God. When a soul cries out for His help, amid the babble and storms of life, He never fails to hear.

Keep Praying

C. H. Spurgeon

You say you have been praying for a matter. Remember, the tree does not always drop its fruit at the first shake you give it. Shake it again! Give it another shake! Sometimes,

when the tree is loaded, and it is pretty firm in the earth, you have to shake it to and fro. At last you have to plant your feet, and get hold of it, and shake it with your might, till you strain every muscle and sinew to get the fruit down. That is the way to pray. Pray until the mercy drops into your lap.

Christ loves for men to beg hard. You cannot be too importunate. That which might be disagreeable to your fellow-creatures, when you ask of them, will be agreeable to Christ. Oh! Get ye to your chambers, ye that are saved! To your bedsides, to your closets, and, *“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.” Isaiah 55:6*

May the Spirit of God constrain you to pray. Jesus must hear you. The gate of heaven is open to the sturdy knocker that affirms he will not take a denial.

“... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16

“Every great movement of God can be traced to a kneeling person!”

— D. L. Moody