

ANSWERED PRAYER

Text: Gen 24:10-15

10 Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and left, taking with him all kinds of good things from his master. He set out for Aram Naharaim and made his way to the town of Nahor.

11 He had the camels kneel down near the well outside the town; it was toward evening, the time the women go out to draw water.

12 Then he prayed, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, give me success today, and show kindness to my master Abraham.

13 See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water.

14 May it be that when I say to a girl, 'Please let down your jar that I may have a drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too'--let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master."

15 Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, who was the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor.

Introduction: How long do you think it takes for your prayer to get to Heaven from where you prayed it? You need to believe that it is not a "LONG DISTANCE CALL" from Jasper, Alabama to Heaven! I think that so many have had what they thought were delays in answers to

prayers that they have come to the conclusion that it takes a long time for God to hear your prayer.

Let's talk about this phenomenon of God's hearing and answering prayer. First, let's look at an Old Testament example that stirs our hearts to thinking. Secondly, the promise made to a remnant people that I believe we need to grasp as ours today. Thirdly, we need to realize or expect God to answer our prayers. In conclusion, we need to consider all that we discussed and see if we cannot make up our minds that God will answer our prayers.

I. Before I Had done Speaking In My Heart.

A. Eliezer has a testimony you need to hear.

1. He is the eldest servant in Abraham's household.
2. He is on an assignment to find a wife for Isaac.

Gen 24:2 So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please, put your hand under my thigh,
3 and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell;
4 but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."

B. He has journeyed to Nahor.

Gen 24:10 Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, for all his master's goods were in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor.

1. He has seated himself near a well.

Gen 24:11 And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water.

2. He has asked God for success and kindness.

Gen 24:12 Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.

3. He has prayed a specific prayer for confirmation.

Gen 24:13 Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.

14 Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'--let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master."

4. He gets an immediate answer.

Gen 24:15 And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder.

16 Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up.

5. He makes his request that will confirm God's favor.

Gen 24:17 And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher."

6. Her reply is exactly as petitioned.

Gen 24:18 So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink.

19 And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking."

7. Whose daughter are you?

Gen 24:22 So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels of gold,

23 and said, "Whose daughter are you? Tell me, please, is there room in your father's house for us to lodge?"

24 So she said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor."

8. Eliezer acknowledges God's blessing.

Gen 24:26 Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the LORD.

27 And he said, "Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."

C. He shares his testimony with Rebekah's family.

1. I am Abraham's servant.

Gen 24:34 So he said, "I am Abraham's servant.

35 The LORD has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.

36 And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has.

2. He sent me to find a wife for Isaac, his son.
Gen 24:37 Now my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell;
38 but you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.'

3. Abraham assured me of God's help.
Gen 24:40 "But he said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house.

4. Eliezer rehearses his prayer for guidance.
Gen 24:42 "And this day I came to the well and said, 'O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go,
43 behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw water, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,"
44'and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"--let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.'

5. He testifies to the immediate answer.
Gen 24:45 "But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew water. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.'

D. Let me remind you of what happened.

1. He prayed in his heart.
2. While he was praying, the answer came.

Gen 24:15 And it happened, before he had finished speaking,

Gen 24:45 "But before I had finished speaking in my heart,

E. What were the reasons Eliezer got such a quick answer?

1. This was a God assignment.
2. Isaac was not to be married to a Canaanite.
3. This wife would be in the lineage of the Messiah.
4. From Isaac's loins the whole world would be blessed.
5. God honored his faith.

II. While They Were Speaking.

A. God makes a promise to a remnant people.

Isa 65:24 "It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear.

God says "before they call, I will answer."

God says "while they are still speaking, I will hear."

B. In other words:

1. God anticipated their need.
2. God anticipated their request.
3. The moment that they put it in His hands by beginning to ask His help God sent the answer.

C. Daniel is a good example.

1. Daniel is petitioning God on behalf of the people of Israel.

Dan 9:19 O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name."

2. Daniel is confessing his sins and the sins of his people.

Dan 9:20 While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill-

3. Daniel has a suddenly experience.

21 while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice.

4. Gabriel tells how God had responded to his prayer.

Dan 9:22 He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding.

23 As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision:

5. Did you read that statement like I did?

“As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given...”

6. God answered Daniel’s prayer before he had finished it.

7. What makes you think that God has dealt any differently with your prayer?

D. There are two phrases here that you need to seriously consider:

1. “While I was still in prayer”
2. “The moment you began praying a command was given”.

E. You need to come to the conclusion that God knows our hearts.

1. David declares this truth.

Ps 139:2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.

2. The writer of Hebrews declares this also.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

F. We would do well to pray regularly the prayer of David.

Ps 19:14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

III. Your Answer is at the Door.

A. Jesus tells us how to approach God.

1. Ask, seek or knock.

Matt 7:7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

2. You will get results is assured.

Matt 7:8 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

3. Don't you think God would know who was at the door and would be delighted to answer?

B. Here is His example.

Matt 7:9 "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

1. If you would not withhold from your children, then why would He.
2. If you would give the best, then why not expect the same from your Heavenly Father.

C. Your Answer is at the Door.

1. Peter has been imprisoned by Herod.

Acts 12:1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church.

Acts 12:5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

2. Peter was scheduled to be executed the next day.

Acts 12:6 And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison.

3. An angel of the Lord came to his rescue while the people were praying.

7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands.

8 Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me."

9 So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.

Acts 12:10 When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

4. When Peter realized he was free, he went to the prayer meeting.

Acts 12:11 And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people."

12 So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

5. Rhoda recognized his voice but did not let him in.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer.

14 When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate.

6. Nobody was expecting God to answer so quickly.

15 But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel."

16 Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished.

- C. Is your answer knocking at the door because you will not believe that God has answered?
 - 1. We refuse the answer because it is not what We expected.
 - 2. We hesitate to accept the answer because we wanted a different answer.
- D. The truth is that when we pray God answers our prayers.
 - 1. Peter has received an invitation and has come.

Acts 10:29 So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?"

- 2. Cornelius tells his story.

30 Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me

31 and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor.

- 3. God says send for Peter.

32 Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.'

33 So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."

- 4. The Holy Spirit is received by the Gentiles.

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.

Conclusion: King David shares a word that you and I need to hear.

2 Sam 7:27 "O LORD Almighty, God of Israel, you have revealed this to your servant, saying, 'I will build a house for you.' So your servant has found courage to offer you this prayer.

God has revealed to David that He will sustain his household and that one of his posterity will sit on the throne of Israel forever. Because God has revealed this Word to King David, he now has the courage to pray a prayer for blessing.

What needs to happen to you and I is that we allow the Holy Spirit to reveal again to us the promises of God in His Word in order that we might have the courage to pray for what is promised you and I as a people in covenant with God.

God knows your heart. God knows your needs. God even knows the things that have caused your heart to waver at His promises. Why don't we accept what has been revealed about God's answering prayer and go to the door and let our answer in?

There is one other thing about answered prayer that you and I need to consider. It is the fact of the help the Holy Spirit gives us when we allow Him to intercede through us.

Rom 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.