

GREAT GRACE FOR 'UNANSWERED' PRAYER: Jer.15: 1; Ezek.14: 13-14; Acts 4: 23-33; 12: 1-4

I. Introduction:

Prayer is a common practice of all – believers and unbelievers e.g. The Philistines prayed in returning The Ark of Covenant back to Israel (1Sam.5 & 6); Fellow travelers with Jonah on the High Sea prayed to God (Jon.); A Canaanite Woman prayed to Christ for healing for her daughter (Matt.15) and Cornelius always prayed (Acts 10).

II. What Is Unanswered Prayer:

What most Christians consider as unanswered prayers are not truly unanswered prayers. In the real sense of the word, unanswered prayer is when God is silent without an answer altogether. This is rare in Scripture and in life e.g. King Saul (1Sam.). Usually, God answers prayer! Our major challenge in prayer often times is how to hear God's voice and know what He is saying. There are either of three likely answers to prayer – Yes, No or Wait. Most Christians only consider their prayers answered when God says 'Yes' but 'Wait' or an outright 'No' are also possible answers from God when we pray. We experience delays when God says, 'Wait' to our prayers while we regard, 'No' as 'Unanswered Prayer'.

III. Cases of 'No' As Unanswered Prayer in Scripture:

1. Job – **Job 1-end**
2. Moses – **Deut.3: 23-29**
3. David – **2Sam.11 & 12**
4. John the Baptist – **Matt.11: 2-3**
5. The Early Church – **Acts 4 & 12**
6. Paul – **2Cor.12: 7-10**
7. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself – **Matt.26: 39; 27: 46**

IV. Some Reasons for 'No' or 'Unanswered. Prayer

1. Unbelief – **Jam.1: 5-8**
2. Wrong Motive or Praying against God's will – **Jam.4: 3; 1Jn.5: 14**
3. Quarrel & Lack of unity or Agreement – **Matt.18: 19; 1Pet.3: 7**
4. Spiritual Pride – **Lk.18: 10**
5. Malice & Wrath – **1Tim.2 8**
6. Unforgiveness – **Mk.11: 25-26**
7. Vain Repetition & Hypocrisy – **Matt.5: 5-6**
8. Lack of persistence – **Lk.18: 1**
9. Lack of Fasting – **Mk.9: 29**
10. Not asking in Jesus' name – **Jn.14: 13-14**

V. Grace for 'Unanswered' Prayer

Usually, we assume and believe that God will always say, 'Yes' when we pray and so do not prepare ourselves for 'No' or 'Wait as possible answers to our prayers. We then find it difficult to cope with delays when God says, 'Wait' or an outright 'No' as answer to our prayers.

Practically speaking, it requires some measure of grace to put up with delays in prayer. It requires much more grace or great grace to put up with an outright 'No' as answer from God when we pray but since answers to our prayers will not always be 'Yes' as it is being generally but erroneously presented, every Christian or child of God therefore must prepare and pray for this Great Grace to put up with unanswered prayers when God decides to answer our prayers with an outright 'No'. However, we should avoid sin generally so that God will not treat anyone of us like King Saul who experienced unanswered prayer in the true sense of the word.