

But What If God Makes You Wait?

What if your prayers about some problem or need are not answered by the Creator God right away?

It could be a personal need that you have, or a situation that involves other people.

Maybe it has to do with failing health or a lengthy illness, any situation that just seems to drag on and on.

You have prayed earnestly about the problem, maybe even fasted.

You have exercised faith and as far as you can determine, done your part.

Still relief has not come.

You may be thinking, *“Oh, if I only had faith like the righteous people in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, then I would see all my problems solved quickly.”*

Is that what the Word of God really shows?

Did God always grant His people instant deliverance from their problems?

If you think the answer is yes, be prepared to be surprised!

The truth is that, while God often intervened speedily in response to the needs of various persons mentioned in the Christian Bible, at other times and in other cases He delayed delivering some of the faithful individuals.

Psalms 11:5 [New King James] *“The LORD tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.”*

Think about that inspired statement in this Psalm written by King David.

When necessary for their own good and to accomplish His plan for all humanity God allows righteous people to endure prolonged, difficult, trying situations. No-one is exempt.

James 5:10 [New King James] *“My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.”*

These were righteous people yet they patiently endured prolonged suffering, yet these were faithful servants of the Creator God.

Moses received numerous immediate and miraculous results after prayer, [**Exodus 15:24-25; Exodus 17:5-6**], nevertheless he also **knew what it was like to experience affliction and trials.**

Psalms 90:13-15 [New King James] *“Return, O LORD! How long? And have compassion on Your servants. Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days! Make us glad according to the days in which You have afflicted us, the years in which we have seen evil.”*

This was a Psalm written by Moses who had to wait, to have patience.

The example of David –

A man who was close to the heart of the Creator God, [Acts 13:22], did receive prompt answers to some of his prayers, [Psalms 138:3] but **not** always, at times God made David wait, even wait a considerable period of time.

Psalms 13:1-2 [New King James] *“How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?”*

This was not the only time that David had to wait for God to answer his prayers, [Psalms 35:17].

David refers to prolonged suffering of a debilitating plague, [Psalms 38:3-10; Psalms 39:10-13].

Psalms 6:2-6 [New King James] *“Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am weak; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled; but You, O LORD, how long? Return, O LORD, deliver me! Oh, save me for Your mercies’ sake! For in death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who will give You thanks? I am weary with my groaning; all night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears.”*

David prayer for healing knowing he was near to death, yet relief only came after David had waited.

The example of Elisha –

God’s servant Elisha often received remarkable and quick results when he presented needs before the Creator God, [read 2 Kings chapters 4-6].

Yet when he himself became ill, God did not heal him immediately, in fact, God let him die, [2 Kings 13:14, 20]. So after nearly 2,500 years Elisha is still waiting, waiting in the grave for his sickness to be healed in a resurrection at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

In the early Church, **Stephen** was full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people, [Acts 6:8] yet none of this prevented him from being the first Christian martyr. **In faith he endured a painful death at the hands of an enraged mob, [Acts 7:54-60].**

In his grave Stephen waits yet for his deliverance, as do thousands of other martyrs, [Revelation 6:9-11].

Though many miracles took place as a result of faith among early true Christians, some of God’s people had to cope with sickness and infirmities that did not go away immediately.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 [New King James] *“And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*

Paul is a great example of this, the problem could have been poor eyesight, [Galatians 6:11]. The possible reason for this could have been what happened to him before conversion, [Acts 9:1-8].

Other examples – Philippians 2:25-27; 1 Timothy 5:23; 2 Timothy 4:20

They all had to wait as their faith in God was tried.

The apostle Peter addressed Christians of his time who had faith, [1 Peter 1:5-7] yet were for a period of time under various trials, had their faith tested.

The entire 11th chapter of Hebrews is devoted to a summary of the lives of many people of great faith.

On many occasions these faithful people received immediate, miraculous answers to prayers.

Yet the very first righteous man of faith, Abel, was murdered in cold blood.

Hebrews 11:35-39 [New King James] *“Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,”*

Many “in faith” suffered trials, tests, afflictions and deprivations.

They had to wait for God to intervene in His time.

What this shows is that, while a lack of faith can certainly cause answers to prayer to be delayed, yet a delayed answer does **not** necessarily mean there is a lack of faith.

Is this lack of immediate response from God to the prayers of a person who has surrendered their life to God [Romans 12:1-2] a reason to become discouraged?

To the contrary, remember what we read in **Psalms 11:5**, the faith that a righteous person has will be tested by God to increase, refine and perfect that faith through being patient.

Romans 5:1-5 [New King James] *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”*

This “hope” is linked to God’s love, one of the “fruits” of the Holy Spirit, [Galatians 5:22-25] being “poured out through our hearts,” is a better translation, [John 7:38-39 in form of loving acts to other people.]

This is the key to why so often we have to wait on God for answers to our prayers.

We are being prepared for a future all true Christians hope for, a place in the created kingdom, [family grown big] of God.

1 Corinthians 15:50 [New King James] *“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.”*

Humans who still have a Satan-inspired nature, [1 John 5:19; John 8:44] cannot be part of that created family of God, for their presence would cause confusion, as Satan is doing in the world in every generation.

1 Corinthians 14:33 [New King James] *“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”*

God is not the author of confusion, Satan is.

Romans 6:1-8 [New King James] *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,”*

This change has to take place including the crucifixion of our old nature, human nature.

This transformation takes time, as we follow the lead of the Holy Spirit, [Galatians 5:25] and take on the “fruits” of the Holy Spirit which are the characteristics we need to have to be part of the created family [Kingdom] of God.

Lamentations 3:26 [New King James] *“It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.”*

This is very good advice from God’s prophet Jeremiah.

James 1:2-4 [New King James] *“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”*

It is through patiently waiting on God through any trials He may allow to come on us, that we are changed into a being who will be acceptable in the created family [Kingdom] of a perfect Triune God.

Romans 8:24-30 [New King James] *“For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? **But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. 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. 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. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”***

Our patient waiting on the work of the Holy Spirit in us, creating a new being, with all the needed trials and tests to produce that character, will in the end “work together for good.”

Philippians 4:6 [New King James] *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;”*

God tells us to take all our needs to Him in prayer, though He does **not** promise He will respond to them immediately.

God does promise certain things –

Peace of mind – **John 14:27; Philippians 4:7.**

Gift of the Holy Spirit – **Luke 11:13.**

Joy and hope – **Romans 15:13.**

Power, patience and longsuffering – **Colossians 1:10-14.**

God introduces Himself as a Master Potter, [Isaiah 64:8].

Romans 9:20-21 [New King James] *“But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why have you made me like this?’ Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honour and another for dishonour?”*

We do not question how God goes about moulding us into beings He wishes to live with Him for eternity in His created family [Kingdom].

A Master Potter does not rush when creating a masterpiece.

Psalms 27:14 [New King James] *“Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!”*

Just wait and see what the Creator God is creating in us, yielding to Him at all times.

Psalms 37:4-7 [New King James] *“Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.”*

The Hebrew word translated “delight” is “â’nag” meaning soft and pliable in a feminine way.

This yielding along with patient waiting is our part in the moulding of our future character that will be in complete harmony with that of our Creator God.