

Delays Are Not Denials

And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? (Luke 18:1-7; verse 7 Revised Standard Version)

I. There are times when God says NO or even turns a deaf ear to prayers:

1. When we are praying selfishly out of a lustful heart (James 4:2-3)
 - a. God wants not only to supply needs but also give us our desires. Anyone who teaches otherwise does not know the generosity of our God and neither do they know His promises (Mark 11:24; John 15:7)
 - b. Yet, our desires must be GODLY ones. If we are delighting ourselves in Him, we can expect to have His desires and they will be met (Ps. 37:4)
2. When we are living in sin and have no desire to repent (Isa. 59:1-2; 1 Pet. 3:12)
 - a. This can be easily resolved by repenting of our sins (2 Chron. 7:14)
3. If we pray with a right attitude and in line with God's promises we are always guaranteed a "YES" rather than a "no" in answer to prayer (2 Cor. 1:20)
 - a. Most people use the excuse that God answers "no," not based on anything that they have seen in Scripture but to excuse their own unbelief and their own failure to receive answers to prayer.
 - b. *Delays in answer to prayer are not necessarily a "no" from God*

II. Why Do We Experience delays in answers to prayer

1. Demonic Forces sometimes tend to delay God's answers (Daniel 10:10-14)
2. Testing of the genuineness of our faith
 - a. *From James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. Greetings. My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience. Let your patience show itself perfectly in what you do. Then you will be perfect and complete and will have everything you need.* (James 1:1-4; New Century Version)
3. God's own timing (Gen. 18:14)
 - a. Some people like to tell God when He should answer their prayer. They want to dictate the time and date in which the prayer is to be answered.
 - b. God is sovereign. His sovereignty does not mean that He will go back on His Word or do things arbitrarily as some theologians imply. Nevertheless, His sovereignty does imply that He will answer at the time and place and means that He chooses. We should also remember

that He is omniscient (all wise and all knowing) and knows the best time, place and means. You will often be glad that He did not do it when you wanted it to when you see that His way was better.

III. How to get from DELAY to DELIVERY

1. Luke 18:1-7.

a. (NIV) *Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.*

b. (ALT) *Now He was also telling an allegory to them to [show] that it is necessary to always be praying and not to continue becoming discouraged, (Analytical-Literal Translation)*

2. Luke 11:9-13

a. (ERV) *So I tell you, **continue** to ask, and God will give to you. **Continue** to search, and you will find. **Continue** to knock, and the door will open for you. (Easy to Read Version)*

b. (AMP) *So I say to you, **Ask and**^[2] **keep on asking** and it shall be given you; **seek and**^[3] **keep on seeking** and you shall find; **knock and**^[4] **keep on knocking** and the door shall be opened to you.*