**Answered Prayer**

**Space man says to Heart: “Earth boy! We abduct you in the name of the Planet Plixbotz! It is futile to resist!” Heart: “Resist? I've been praying for this! So what's the first stop, boys? Pluto? Venus? The crystal rings of Saturn?” Space man: “The golden arches of McDonald's. I have a hankering for a McFlurry.” *(Mark Tatulli, in Heart Of The City comic strip)***

**64% of Americans say they pray more than once a day. 41% say their prayers are answered often. *(Beliefnet/U.S. News & Woirld Report, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 7, 2005)***

**If someone attacked your faith in front of millions of people, how would you respond? Recently I watched someone respond to an attack on his faith in the most gracious way. “The occasion was the ‘Today’ show. The guest was former President Jimmy Carter, who was promoting his new book ‘Living Faith.’ President Carter was talking about his faith, which is what the book discusses. The ‘Today’ show host, Bryant Gumbel, said, “You write that you prayed more during your four years in office. I think it’s fair to say you are consistently viewed as one of the more ineffective presidents of modern times.” And then Gumbel smugly asked, “What do you think, if anything, that says about the power of prayer?” The question was incredibly rude, and Jimmy Carter might have been justified in walking off the set. The scene reminded me of other explosive exchanges between politicians and the press. But President Carter showed no emotion. Instead, he calmly answered: “Well, it depends on what you’re praying for. If I was praying for the approval of NBC, then I wouldn’t have been successful. But if I was praying to keep our country at peace; if I was praying for, for instance, all the hostages to return home safe and free; if I was praying for a nation whose integrity was never questioned; if I was praying for an administration within which there was never a breath of scandal; if I was praying for the ability to tell the American people the truth; if those were the things that were the center of my prayer, then I would say that the prayers were answered.” *(Chuck Colson, in Breakpoint)***

**From the Princeton Class of ‘41 Notes: “My wife and I prayed every night for children until we discovered that’s not the way to have them. Now we have five.” *(Malcolm S. Forbes, in Forbes magazine)***

**I know we can’t solve our problems alone. We need God’s help. We must not be afraid to bring God back into our lives. That doesn’t mean getting religion directly involved in politics. Long ago, when the Constitutional Convention was deadlocked and it looked like it might dissolve, Ben Franklin reminded his colleagues how important prayer had been to the new nation during its battle with England. Do you know, they prayed, and it was a turning point. I don’t mean everybody must worship in the same way, but we must all find our love for God and put our love into action. *(Rev. Billy Graham, in Parade magazine)***

**Cosign: The Fillmores were not only hard pressed at home, but sometimes financial need visited the Unity rooms too. Once Charles Fillmore endorsed a note for a friend; the friend failed to meet the obligation, and Charles was asked to pay. The sheriff threatened to sell out the printing office, and for a time it looked as if the Unity work would come to a sudden end; but the Fillmores prayed and the threat was never carried out. *(James Dillet Freeman, in The Story of Unity, p. 115)***

**I am not much given to visions and personal revelations, but recently I had a real experience of the working of God in my life. As you know, I’ve been on a diet. I’ve been pretty good, but what a struggle. The other day I had to go downtown.  As I started out I remembered the Daylight Donut Shop. They make some real world class doughnuts. Driving along I thought, “A cup of coffee and a doughnut would really hit the spot.” But then I remembered my diet. So I said a silent prayer, “God, if you want me to stop for a doughnut, let there be a parking place right in front.” Sure enough, seventh time around the block. *(Illustration Digest)***

**Curly hair: That’s what my grandmother always wanted for me. But, like the rest of the gifts in my family, I had hair that was straight and thin. Not that it mattered to me. At four, hair was nothing but a nuisance. I hated sitting still while my mother brushed and styled it. But how I cherished my fine, straight hair when it suddenly started falling out. Alarmed, Mom took me to the doctor, but he couldn't find anything wrong with me. “Sometimes it just happens. I wouldn't worry too much,” he assured us. “It'll grow back eventually.” Not worry? School was about to start. I couldn't go to kindergarten bald! We hurried home and told the rest of the family. While my mother clipped my hair short to take weight off the roots, my grandmother prayed. “Please stop Britni's hair from falling out,” she cried. “And, Lord, let it come back thick and curly,” she added with a wink. After three weeks my hair did stop coming out, but as it grew back, it seemed different. Wavier than before, thicker. It was coming, in curly. Extremely curly! I am now 15 years old and my hair is as curly as a fresh perm. Even strangers comment on it! Most days I like my hair, but it can be a real pain to tame. Sometimes as I wrestle to comb through my corkscrew locks. I think: Be careful what you pray for, because you just might get it! *(Britni Radojits, in Guideposts)***

 **We sometimes think that we pray when we read and declare certain statements of Truth. We have very little idea of the way in which the answers to those prayers are coming. And we do not prove that, we expect them to be answered. For almost immediately after praying we go on doing the things we have been doing, which does not allow any answers. And we think and say that which is not in accord with the prayers we have made. For example, we go into the silence and declare statements of prosperity. Then in writing a letter we speak of lack and failure and longing. Which proves that we have those thoughts and feelings of lack in our heart, and that we are really dwelling on them more strongly than we do on the Truth that we have prayed. *(Myrtle Fillmore’s Healing Letter’s, p. 33)***

**There are times when our demonstration seems to be slowed down. This is the time to recognize that there is something called divine delay. This means that the timetable we have set is being slowed down for a wonderful reason. There is a greater good which is going to take place if we will just wait patiently for our results. *(Penny Moon)***

**My mother always told me God hears every prayer. If I’d pray really hard for something and nothing happened, she would say, “Sometimes God’s answer is no.” But what if God just doesn’t answer right away? You could be 42, your needs will have changed, and all of a sudden you look out at your front yard one morning and there’s a Shetland pony!” *(Mary Armstrong, comedian)***

 **A young girl was quite fond of her little doll. One day, not watching where she was going, she tripped and fell. When she got up she found that her doll was badly damaged. Her brother, who saw all this, laughed when he saw the broken doll. “Laugh all you want,” she told him, “but I am going to pray to God to fix my doll.” “Oh, yeah? He won’t even answer you,” jeered the brother.  “I’ll bet he will,” the girl replied with complete conviction. The girl began to pray and her brother went away to play.  When he returned a few hours later there was the doll, still in pieces. “Looks like you lost the bet,” he taunted. “God didn’t answer you at all.” “Oh, yes he did,” the girl replied. “God said, ‘No’.” *(Paul J. Wharton, in Stories and Parables, p. 28)***

**The flight had been long and bumpy, and my heart sank as the pilot announced that there was fog at London’s Heathrow Airport and that, unless it cleared quickly, we would be forced to divert to Manchester. A clergyman sitting beside me closed his eyes and mouthed a silent prayer. A few minutes later we were asked to fasten our seat belts for a landing at Heathrow. Turning to my neighbor, I congratulated him on his successful appeal to “headquarters.” “On the contrary,” he sighed. “I live in Manchester.” *(P. Moss, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Standing near a Hollywood Chevron station charging $3.43 gallon for unleaded gas, a prayer group asked God this week to comfort those paying more. “These high gas prices, Lord, bring them down,” Bishop Donald Downing, pastor of Heart to Heart Christian Center in Fort Washington, Maryland, prayed. The group hopes to induce the same miracle the effort’s organizer, Pray Live, says it brought about when fuel prices dropped in late April. *(Los Angeles Daily News, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, May 19, 2006)***

**Mother: “Sometimes God answers our prayers “Yes” and sometimes it’s “No.” Child: “What if it’s not a yes or no question?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Dolly: “Does God answer prayers on Good Friday or is this His day off?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)*

Some of God’s greatest gifts are unanswered prayers. *(Garth Brooks)***

**Salma Hayek attributes the development of her career-enhancing breasts to divine intervention, says In Touch. As a teenager, Hayek was flat-chested, and in her despair she decided to ask for God's help. “I went to a church that was supposed to do miracles and I put my hands in holy water and I said, “Please God, give me breasts," Hayek says. Within just a few months, she began to swell into her current shape. *(The Week magazine, June 23, 2006)***

**The Wednesday-night church service coincided with the last day of hunting season. Our pastor asked who had bagged a deer. No one raised a hand. Puzzled, the pastor said, “I don’t get it. Last Sunday many of you were missing because of hunting season. I had the whole congregation pray for your deer.” One hunter groaned, “Well, it worked. They’re all safe.” *(Arla Ford, in Reader’s Digest)***

 **My four-year-old granddaughter, Caitlin, was impatient for a sibling. One morning she told her mother, “Maybe if we both prayed out loud, God would hear us.” So they prayed together. As soon as they finished, Caitlin asked, “What did he say?” Her mother explained that it doesn’t work that way; sometimes it takes a long time to get an answer. Caitlin was indignant” “Do you mean we were praying to an answering machine?” *(Virginia Bette, in Reader’s Digest)***

**The computer screen reads: “To:GOD@HEAVEN.ORG. Subject: “REQUESTS.” One minister looks at another and says: “It may be impersonal, but it’s improved my answer-to-prayers 200%.” *(The Joyful Newsletter)***

**Good week for answered prayers, after the launch in Italy of a line of designer Islamic jeans. “Al Quds" jeans feature extra-large pockets to hold personal effects during prayer, sacred-green stitching, and extra fabric to facilitate kneeling. *(The Week magazine, March 31, 2006)***

**I keep a prayer journal, and one evening I was feeling especially discouraged as I wrote my entry. I filled page after page with my litany of complaints, working myself into a lather of self-pity. I asked God to send me a miracle. I started flipping back through the pages of my journal and reading past entries. Each one included my prayer requests. The more I read, the more I saw how I had been blessed: I hadn’t even noticed that many of my requests had already been answered. A sick friend was now healthy; a troubled marriage was growing stronger. The miracle that night was not that all my complaints to God were answered the way I expected them to be, but the quiet reminder that God takes care of everything, maybe not exactly as we might have planned and maybe not at the moment we ask, but in his own way and his own time. That’s more than enough miracle for me. *(Jodi Lewis, in Guideposts)***

**Since our yard needed a trim, I figured it would be a nice surprise if I could get it done before my husband, Hap, arrived home from work. I pushed our lawn mower out from the shed, but the engine wouldn’t start. I pulled the starter cord over and over. Still the mower just sat there, maddeningly dormant. “God,” I said, frustrated, “if you will just start this mower for me, I promise I won’t bother you with anything trivial ever again!” I yanked the cord once more. The motor came to life with a satisfying purr and I energetically attacked the yard. Before long, the job was done. I reached down and switched the lever to off. The motor stayed on. I wiggled the lever back and forth, but still the engine didn’t die. I pushed the mower forward and back, fiddled with the throttle and gear knobs and again moved the lever to off. The motor didn’t miss a beat. I shot a suspicious look upward. Now what do I do? I was determined to keep my end of the bargain, so that didn’t give me much to do. When Hap got home a few minutes later, he said, “Honey, the lawn looks great. But why’s the mower still running?” “God’s teaching me a lesson,” I said. At his odd look, I explained my hasty promise. We went out to investigate, and Hap tinkered with the motor. Nothing he did stopped the rumbling. Finally, he twisted out the spark plug and the engine died. “Well, that’ll teach you to ask for it to start and stop next time,” he chuckled. Not only does God answer prayers, he also has a sense of humor. *(Marilyn Evans, in Guideposts magazine)***

**I never went to bed in my life and I never ate a meal in my life without saying a prayer. I know my prayers have been answered thousands of times, and I know that I never said a prayer in my life without something good coming of it. *(Jack Dempsey)***

**Perhaps his prayers really were answered because his “life-prayer” was the message he sent twenty-three and a half hours of every day. It this sounds harsh, just remember the idea of our entire lives being a prayer.  What was the overall message of that man’s life? That was his true prayer. *(Richard & Mary-Alice Jafola, in The Quest, p. 117)***

**Some prayers are answered almost at once. Others take longer -- usually because it takes longer for us to accept the answer we are seeking. *(Jack E. Addington)***

 **God has not always answered my prayers. If He had, I would have married the wrong man -- several times. *(Mrs. Billy Graham)***

**First of all, we need to establish one thing. God always answers prayer, even if the answer is “no.” *(Delia Sellers, in Abundant Living magazine)***

**If your prayers are not being answered, search your consciousness and see if there is not someone whom you have yet to forgive. Find out if there is not some old thing about which you are very resentful. If you cannot forgive at present, you will have to wait for your demonstration until you can, and you will have to postpone finishing your recital of the Lord’s Prayer too. *(Emmet Fox, in The Sermon on the Mount, p. 188)***

**The following poem says it all. It was written by an anonymous soldier more than 100 years ago and was found on a battlefield during the Civil War. He knew the true meaning of Thanksgiving: “I asked God for strength that I might achieve, I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey. I asked for help that I might do greater things, I was given infirmity that I might do better things. I asked for riches that I might be happy, I was given poverty that I might be wise. I asked for power that I might have the praise of man, I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God. I asked for all things that I might enjoy life, I was given life that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing that I asked for, but everything I had hoped for. Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered. I am, among all men, most richly blessed.” *(Ken Magid)***

 **When the gods wish to punish us, they answer our prayers. *(Oscar Wilde)***

**Perhaps the worst punishment God could visit upon us would be to answer all our prayers, to break through by miraculous intervention, heal all our diseases, solve all our problems and leave us children, undeveloped. *(J. Wallace Hamilton, in Still the Trumpet Sounds, p. 102)***

**Mother: “Sometimes God answers our prayers ‘Yes’ and sometimes it’s ‘No’.” Child: “What if it’s not a yes or no question?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**How often do I come to God not with consumer requests, but simply with a desire to spend time with him, to discern what he wants from me and not vice versa? When I did that in the elk meadow, I mysteriously found that the answer to my prayers for guidance was around me all along. Nothing changed but my receptors through prayer, I opened them to God. “For all things sing you," wrote the poet Rilke, “at times we just hear them more clearly.” *(Philip Yancey, in Christianity Today)***

**Recently a friend and I were discussing prayer. “It seems to me,” I said, “that the word ‘release’ is one of the most important components of answered prayer. When I pray and then release the prayer to the divine Power, results follow, often very quickly. When I think about it constantly, and pray about it often, results seem to be delayed.” “Give me an example,” my friend suggested. “For instance,” I explained. “When you plant a row of carrot seeds, you follow directions, cover them up, relax, and in due time you have a row of carrots. If you keep digging them up to see if they have sprouted, guess what? You will be going to the store to buy carrots. Oh, you may be able to find a few twisted little carrots where you hoped to find lots of fine, firm, crispy carrots. But, alas, your impatience or lack of faith in Mother Nature resulted in this failure.” *(Dr. Delia Sellers)***

**Who rises from prayer a better person, his prayer is answered. *(George Meredith)***

**This morning I woke up to a cold, miserable day. So I prayed for the good Lord to send me strength to get up, get dressed and run ten miles. Then I rolled over and went back to sleep. He sent me wisdom instead. *(Trust Hall Insurance Services)***

**God answers all the prayers. Sometimes he answers “yes,” sometimes he answers “no,” and sometimes the answer is “you gotta be kidding.” *(Jimmy Carter)***

**Answer my prayers. Steal this car. *(Selma Glasser)***

 **More tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered ones. *(St. Theresa of Avila)***

**I found seven possible things that may be happening when our prayers are not answered: We have core attitudes and / or beliefs that block our receiving the answer. We do not see the universe as friendly. How we live is incongruent with what we seek. We haven’t been persistent in our prayers. The answer has come, yet we do not see it for it is in an unexpected form. We are in a “dark night of the soul.” Our soul has made a decision that is unconscious to us. *(Janet B. Ellsworth, in Pathfinders Quarterly)***

**Once there was a little girl whose brother made a trap that caught sparrows. She prayed every night that it might fail. One day her face became radiant and for three days she prayed hard. Her faith had become so absolute so suddenly that her mother asked one morning, “Mary, why are you so sure that your prayer will be answered?” Mary smiled, “I know that my prayer will be answered because I went out there three days ago and kicked the trap to pieces.” *(King Duncan and Angela Akers)*I don’t know of a single foreign product that enters this country untaxed except the answer to prayer. *(Mark Twain)***

**When for a purpose I had prayed and prayed and prayed
 until my words seemed worn and bare with arduous use,
  and all my fervor and persistence brought no hope.
I paused to give my weary brain a rest and ceased my anxious cry
 in that still moment after self had tried and failed.
  There came a glorious vision of God’s Power and Lo.
 My prayer was answered in that hour. *(Lowell Fillmore)***

**Our prayers are answered not when we are given what we ask but when we are challenged to be what we can be. *(Morris Adler)***

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