

## **WEDNESDAY EVENING (November 13<sup>th</sup>) • Prayer & Providence**

### **When God Says “No” or “Wait”**

It's not unusual to hear someone say, “I prayed about my problem, but God didn't hear or answer my prayer.” Is it that God didn't hear, or did he say “wait” or “no”?

The claim that God doesn't hear or answer prayer is not new. Consider the example of Habakkuk (1:1-4). The LORD responded by telling the prophet that he was thoroughly familiar with the situation and condition of the people and that he was doing something about it that would astound Habakkuk because what he was doing about the matter was completely different from what Habakkuk was looking for (1:5-11). The Chaldeans would be the instrument of God's judgment against the conditions about which Habakkuk had been praying. Yes, God heard and saw and was acting.

I must realize that, precious as I may be as an individual in God's sight, I am but one strand in a huge and complex tapestry on which God is working out his eternal plan.

#### **When God Refuses to Hear or Regard Prayer**

- When I turn away from God, refusing to hear him when he speaks (Isa 59:1-2; 55:6-7; 58:9).
- When I seek to hide iniquity in my heart (Psa 66:13-19; Prov 28:9).
- When I am proud, arrogant, and self-righteous before God (Luke 18:9-14).
- If I am seeking forgiveness but refuse to forgive others (Mark 11:25; Matt 6:14-15).
- If I do not believe that God hears and is going to answer my prayer (James 1:5-8; Heb 11:6).
- If I am praying selfishly, with impure motives, seeking to gratify the flesh (James 4:1-4).
- If marital troubles are destroying the spirit in which I ought to pray (1 Pet 3:7; Col 3:18-19).

#### **When God Hears, But Says “No”**

- Moses (Psa 106:32-33; Num 20:10-12; Deut 3:23-27)
- Paul (2 Cor 12:1-10)

#### **When God Hears, But Says “Wait”**

- Job (19:7; 30:20; 42:1-6)
- The woman of Canaan (Matt 15:21-28)
- Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21-42)
- Mary and Martha (John 11:1-45)
- Souls beneath the altar (Rev 6:9-11; 20:1-6)