

If God Answers Prayers -- How Can Anyone Have Freewill?

Almost every Christian believes that God answers prayers – at least some prayers - but rarely do Christians examine the mechanism under which God operates to answer prayers. They believe it just happens in some mystical way.

But does God just “jump in” now and then in the life of a single person to answer a particular prayer? Almost every prayer request requires control over many different lives - for a significant period of time - in order for the prayer to be answered.

For example, if you pray to be successful when you apply for a particular job and God answers your prayer in a positive way, what is the mechanism involved in that answer – in you being hired for that specific job?

God must control, at least for a time, the mind (thinking) of many different people, including; the thinking of all the people who interview you (and there may be interviews at several different levels in a major company or organization) and the thinking of all those who interview the other applicants, as well as the thinking of the one or ones who make the final decision on who will be hired.

God must make sure that those people actually arrive at work on that day, that they are not out sick, nor are they called away to some other task at that time.

God must have some control over your mind to make sure your resume is assembled in a way that impresses the interviewers above the resumes of all the other applicants. And even YOU must show up on time and give all the right answers to all the individuals who interview you.

The hiring process in a major corporation can be quite complex. There are recruiters, committee interviews, individual interviews, and, in some cases, higher level committees that review the interviewers' synopses.

Does God have to have prior control to make sure that company hired the specific interviewers who would give you a favorable recommendation for that job?

Does God control the entire mind of all the people involved in that particular episode, or just the part of their mind that is involved in choosing you for that job?

Because God is answering the prayers of many people around the world simultaneously, is He temporarily controlling various parts of the minds of millions of individuals for short periods of time?

Or is God in control of everything – all the time – in order to answer millions of prayers worldwide?

Or does God NOT answer prayers, and what we view as answered prayers are just coincidences?

Freewill?

After all, Christians believe that God has given everyone Freewill and that everyone is completely in control of his or her decisions. If that is true, how could God EVER answer ANY prayer?

Cognitive Dissonance

This is more evidence of Cognitive Dissonance in the Christian church, defined as holding two completely opposite beliefs at the same time: 1) God answers prayers, and 2) Every human being has complete freewill.

But the Bible tells us:

God is “operating ALL in accord with the council of **His OWN Will.**”
Eph 1:11

“**All is of God.** . . .” Romans 11:36

“**A man's steps are directed of the Lord:** how then can a mortal understand his ways?” Prov 20:24

“. . . **He removeth kings, and setteth up kings;**” Daniel 2:21

“**For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill His will,** and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”
Rev 17:17

God said of Pharaoh, “**I have raised you up for this very purpose,** that I might show you My power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” Ex 9:16

“But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said to Moses.” Ex 9:12

God told Moses to ask Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, but God also told Moses that Pharaoh would **not** let them go, at least not at that time. How could God make that prediction if He was not in total control of Pharaoh?

Did God know what Pharaoh would do because “God knows the end from the beginning” – or did God PLAN the events to happen in that way? How can God accomplish His goals for humanity if He has lost control of everyone in His creation.

What ARE God's goals for humanity?

God is NOT WILLING that ANY should perish, but that all come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

No Second Chance

I have heard Christians argue that obviously God is NOT in control of everything because people - who have not repented - are “perishing” all the time. Even though Christians know that ALL those who die without knowing the Lord will be back for the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the millennium, churches teach that there is “No Second Chance.” They believe that NO ONE will have any chance of salvation at that time.

But if there is No Second Chance, why would God resurrect the Unsaved at all - if He's just going to kill them again – or torture them forever in hellfire? Why wouldn't God just let them continue to sleep in death instead of resurrecting them? Why would God choose instead to resurrect them if they will have NO CHANCE of salvation at that time?

The wages of sin is death

Christians frequently quote: Romans 6:23, “The wages of sin is death.” Indeed, the wages of sin IS death - in this life - but everyone who dies without salvation will be resurrected in the Second Resurrection - - for the Judgment!

And how does God's Word define the “Judgment”?

“Judgment returns unto righteousness.” (Judgment returns us to right-doing = righteousness). Psalms 94:15

“When the Judgments of God are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness (they will learn to do right).” Isa 26:9

What is God’s purpose at the Judgment?

God’s purpose at the Judgment is to turn the Unsaved (the wicked) back to Righteousness – to right-doing – AFTER they have “reaped what they have sown.”

In the parable of the Lost Sheep, how long did the shepherd (representing Jesus Christ), search for the ONE Lost Sheep?

There was NO cut-off time. The shepherd searched for the one lost sheep - - - **until he found it!**

How long did the woman search for the Lost Coin? **Until she found it! Again, there was no cut-off time!**

The Feast of First Fruits and later - - - the Whole Harvest

The First Resurrection

Firstfruits was an Israelite feast held in the early spring at the beginning of the grain harvest, a time of thanksgiving for God’s provision.

But later, came the whole harvest!

At the Second Coming of Christ, a relatively small number of all those who have been born on the earth will be saved. The First Resurrection is for those who died knowing Jesus Christ. Those resurrected, along with the righteous who are still living on the earth at the Second Coming, will together be taken to heaven.

This is represented by the “Feast of **Firstfruits**.”

The Second Resurrection

After the 1,000 year millennium, comes the Second Resurrection

When Paul testified before Felix, he said, “that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust” [Acts 24:15](#)

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” Rev 20:4

In the fall of the agricultural year comes the “Whole Harvest”, representing all those who died **not** knowing Jesus Christ. They will be raised in the Second Resurrection (Rev 20:4) to “reap what they have sown.” The troubles they encounter while reaping what they have sown, will ultimately lead to their turning back to Jesus Christ – turning back to Righteousness.

This group, resurrected in the Second Resurrection, represents the “Whole Harvest” that comes after the “Firstfruits” resurrected in the First Resurrection.

Feeding the 5,000

After Jesus fed the 5,000 plus women and children, and after Jesus fed the 4,000 plus women and children, the disciples were told to pick up the unused bread and put it into baskets. Jesus did not waste the bread. If He wouldn't waste the bread, requiring that every piece be picked up and saved, why would He “throw away” His creatures – the people that He has created?

Certainly God does not value bread more than people!

In fact, He says:

“I will NEVER leave you or forsake you.” Heb 13:5

In order for God to fulfill that promise, He must have complete control over the lives of everyone He has created, even though He allows us to **think** we are independent of God. He allows us to **think** we have “freewill.”

God has NOT lost control of His creation. He is the Potter - we are the clay.

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord:

2 “Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.”

3 So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel.

4 **And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.**

5 Then the word of the Lord came to me:

6 “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the Lord. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. Jer 18:1-6

We are like Clay in the Potter's Hand

Like clay in the Potter's hand, God accomplishes His will in us - - - and His WILL is that,

“ . . . none should perish, but ALL should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

If God answers prayers – which He does – then **no one** can have Freewill!

And glory be to God for that!