



**ineffective**  
**PRAYER**

*JAMES 4:2*

Why does God say “No” to our prayers?

Obviously, after a good deal of time has passed, if we are not receiving what we fervently petition Him for, – we tend to believe He has said, “No.”

**What other options could be happening?**

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(Matt. 7:9) Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?

(Matt. 7:10) Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?

(Matt. 7:11) If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

## When We Pray, if...

**Request is Wrong – God says “No.”**

**Timing is Wrong – God says, “Not Yet!”** (Let God be God! – Acts 1:6-8; David chased by King Saul)

**We Need to Correct Something – God says, “Fix it! Learn & Grow.”**  
(Chastisement needed – Heb. 12:5-11)

**If All is Right – God says, “Yes”**

**Or**

**He says, “Wait! I have something better in mind for you.”**  
(Paul’s Thorn – 2 Cor. 12:8-10)


We hear people say, “The only door left open for us to walk through was Option A, so God closed the other doors.” God said, “Yes, choose Option A.”

**What other possibilities could be happening in this scenario?**

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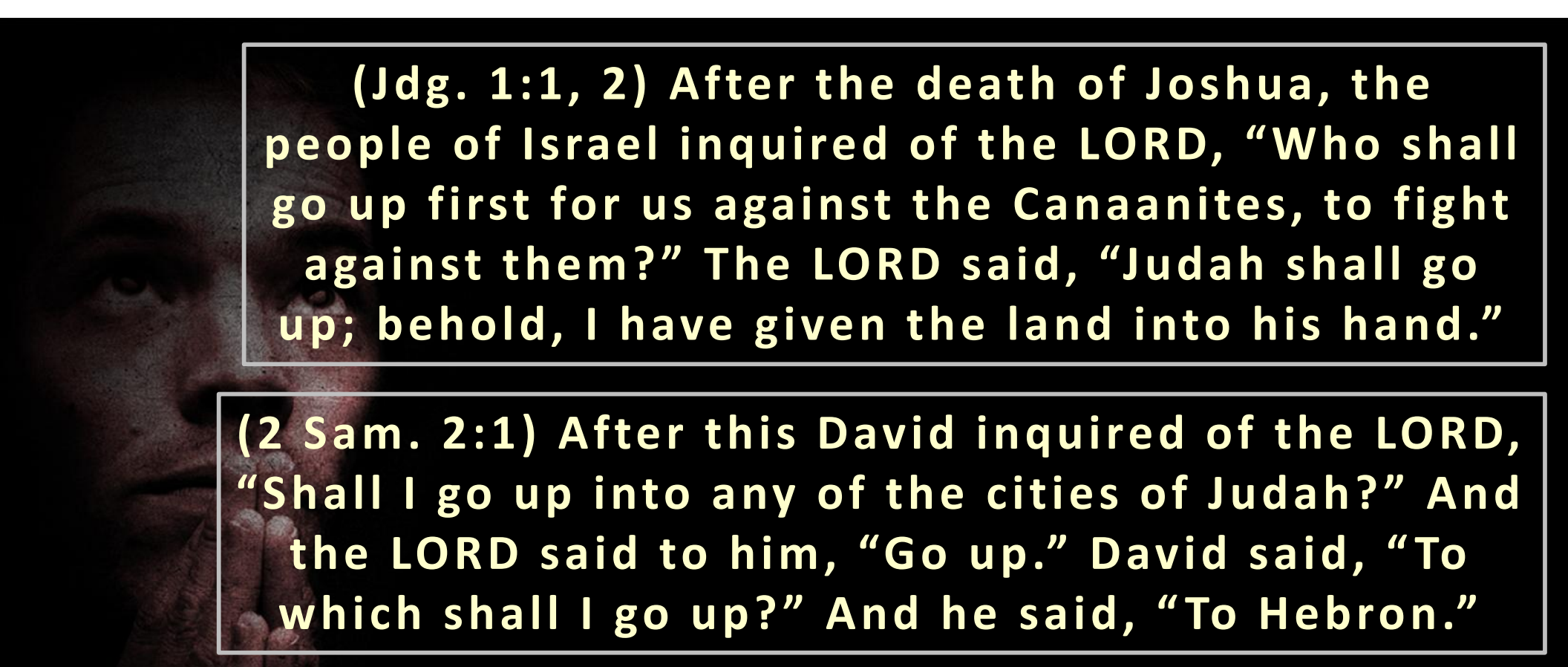




**We don't know if God has said "Yes, No, Wait, etc." UNLESS God speaks Directly to us!**

**How did People in the OT Know God had answered their prayers?**

**Judges 1:1-2; 2  
Samuel 2:1; 5:19; 2  
Kings 20:5;  
cf. 1 Kings 22:4-8**




**(Jdg. 1:1, 2) After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the LORD, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” The LORD said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.”**

**(2 Sam. 2:1) After this David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?” And the LORD said to him, “Go up.” David said, “To which shall I go up?” And he said, “To Hebron.”**

**(2 Kings 20:5) “Turn back, and say to Hezekiah..., Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD...**

**(2 Sam. 5:19) David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?” And the LORD said to David, “Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand.”**



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**How do People in the "Last Days" Know God has answered their prayers?**


**Heb. 1:1-2; 2 Cor. 12:7-9;  
1 Cor. 4:6; 2:10-13,16;  
2 Pet. 1:20-21  
Eph. 3:3-5**

**(Heb. 1:1-2) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...**

**(1 Cor. 4:6) I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written...**

**(2 Pet. 1:20-21) ...no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**

**(Eph. 3:3-5) How the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.**



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**OT: God spoke in "many ways" – Directly**

**NT: God Speaks in Jesus through His Word. We Cannot Today Inquire of God Directly the Answer to Our Prayers!**

# Danger of "Subjectivism"

**Self-Deception: "Wanting the Answer to be..."**

**David (1 Sam. 24:1-7; Balaam (Num. 22:12-13,18-22; 23:12,26; 2 Pet. 2:15)**

**God Testing Us: "We see 'Yes,' but God is Discerning Our Heart! Balaam; Hezekiah (2 Chron. 32:31); Deut. 8:2; 13:3**

**(Deut. 8:2) And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.**

**(2 Chron. 32:31) And so in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart.**

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**(2 Cor. 11:14) And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (2 Cor. 2:11) so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.**

**Devil Tempting Us: "We see 'Yes,' but Satan has Entered Our Heart!**

**John 13:2; Matt. 4:8-9; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14**

**(Matt. 4:8-9) Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."**

## ...Because of Unprayed Prayers

(James 4:2) You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, **because you do not ask.**

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*JAMES 4:2*



...Because of Unprayed Prayers

...Because of Unconfessed Sin

(Psalms 66:18) If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

(Proverbs 28:9) If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.

(1 Peter 3:12) For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

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JAMES 4:2



...Because of Unprayed Prayers

...Because of Unconfessed Sin

...Because of Unbelieving Minds

(James 1:6-8) But let him ask in faith, **with no doubting**, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

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...Because of Unprayed Prayers

...Because of Unconfessed Sin

...Because of Unbelieving Minds

...B/c of Unrighteous Motives

(James 4:3) You ask and do not receive, **because you ask wrongly,** to spend it on your **passions.**

(1 John 5:14) And this is the confidence that we have toward him, **that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.**

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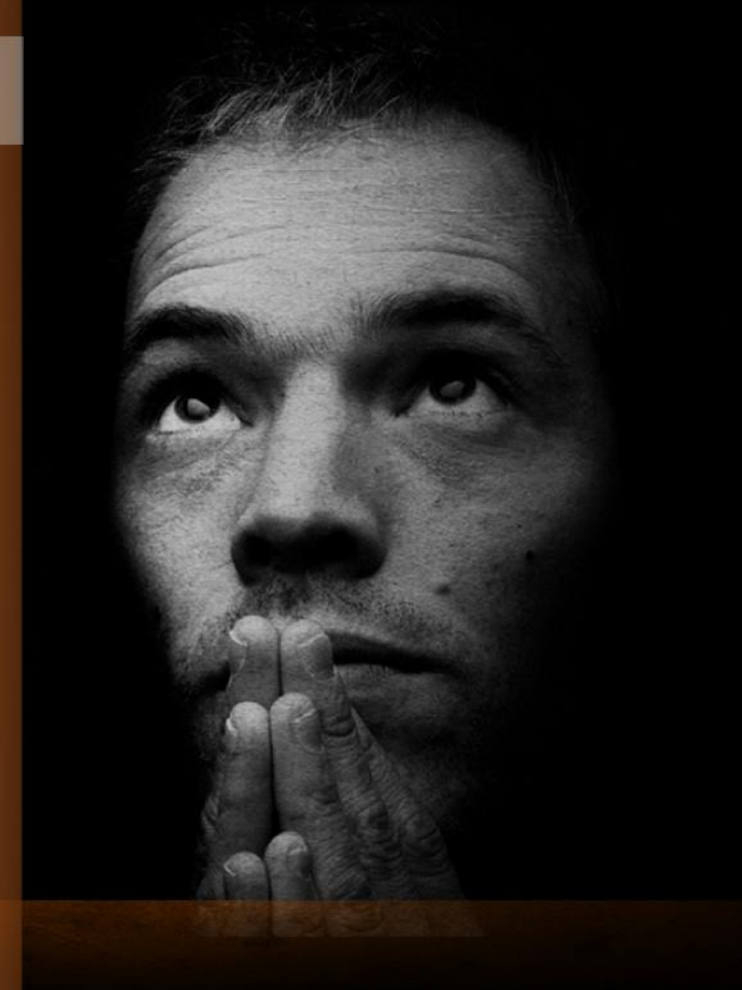
...B/c of Unresolved Conflicts

(Mark 11:25) And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

(Matthew 5:23) So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you,

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...Because of Unprayed Prayers

...Because of Unconfessed Sin

...Because of Unbelieving Minds

...B/c of Unrighteous Motives

...B/c of Unresolved Conflicts

B/c of Uncompassionate Hearts

(Proverbs 21:13) Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor **will himself call out and not be answered.**

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...Because of Unprayed Prayers

...Because of Unconfessed Sin

...Because of Unbelieving Minds

...B/c of Unrighteous Motives

...B/c of Unresolved Conflicts

B/c of Uncompassionate Hearts

B/c Husbands Treat Wife Badly

(1 Peter 3:7) ...Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman...so that your prayers may not be hindered.

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