

## Why do prayers go unanswered?

A few Biblical reasons for Unanswered prayer

1. Unanswered Prayer – When a person repays goodness with evil

### **Psalm 35:12-14**

<sup>12</sup> They repay me evil for good  
and leave my soul forlorn.

<sup>13</sup> Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth  
and humbled myself with fasting.  
When **my prayers returned to me unanswered,**

<sup>14</sup> I went about mourning  
as though for my friend or brother.  
I bowed my head in grief  
as though weeping for my mother.

2. Unanswered Prayer – because of Idolatry

### **Isaiah 1:14-16 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>14</sup> I hate your new moon celebrations and your annual festivals.  
They are a burden to me. I cannot stand them!

<sup>15</sup> When you lift up your hands in prayer, I will not look.  
**Though you offer many prayers, I will not listen,**  
for your hands are covered with the blood of innocent victims.

In the above scripture, it is evident that during a time of idolatry, Israel continued to make sacrifices to the Living God. This suggests that a person can be idolatrous and yet, be prayerful. Idols can take the shape of a self-indulgent lifestyle, one's career, being a parent, a husband/a wife

3. Unanswered Prayer – because the Lord is Disciplining a person

### **Lamentations 3 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>1</sup> I am the one who has seen the afflictions  
that come from the **rod of the Lord's anger.**

<sup>7</sup> He has walled me in, and I cannot escape.  
He has bound me in heavy chains.

<sup>8</sup> And though I cry and shout,  
**he has shut out my prayers.**

<sup>31</sup> For no one is abandoned  
by the Lord forever.

<sup>32</sup> **Though he brings grief, he also shows compassion**  
because of the greatness of his unfailing love.

<sup>33</sup> For he does not enjoy hurting people  
or causing them sorrow.

4. Unanswered Prayer – because of a person’s Sinful Habits

**1 Peter 3:12**

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer,  
but the face of the Lord is against **those who do evil**.

5. Unanswered Prayer – because of Disputing or Disrespect for one’s wife

**1 Timothy 2:8**

I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, **without anger or disputing**  
(including theological disputes).

**1 Peter 3:7-8(New Living Translation)**

In the same way, you husbands must give honour to your wives. Treat your wife with  
understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your  
equal partner in God’s gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not  
be hindered.