

EXAMPLES OF RESPONSE TO GOD'S ANSWER

In the next part of this study are some instances when prayer is answered in a way *different* than petitioned. Again, this study will focus on the individual's *response* to God's answer.

E. THE RESPONSE OF JONAH - In Time of Despair

The life of Jonah is a great example of when a person knows the will of God but demonstrates a response of "anything but that!" Can you relate to a time in your life when you thought, "This can't be the will of God! Doesn't He want me to be happy? I don't want this direction for my life!" After much rationalization, you might hope for a "misunderstanding" of God's will and search for permission for the will of God to be interpreted differently.

1. During what time of Israel's history was Jonah a prophet? 2 Kings 14:23-25
2. What made God's instruction (Jonah 1:2) unique to a prophet of Israel?
 - Study the response of the sailors (1:5-6, 14-16) during the storm. What spiritual message are we to learn from this? Was this an example of an affliction of a child of God (Jonah 2:1) used of God to save others? Or is this an example of how the unsaved will respond at the end of time? Luke 23:30; Rev. 6:12-17
3. After he was thrown into the sea, for what did Jonah actually pray? Jonah 2:2-7
 - Compare the prayer of Jonah to Ps. 116:1-10. Is the response of Jonah a spiritual example of how one is brought to salvation? Lam. 3:55-58.
4. Read Jonah 3. After his surrender to the will of God, what was Jonah's frustration? (Jonah 4:2-3) Why should Jonah have not been surprised? (Ezekiel 3:11)
 - Does Jonah 4:9-11 teach that God does have pity on the unsaved or a spiritual example of delaying judgment? Does Ezekiel 18:31-32 apply to those who will become saved from their state of wickedness or to those who remain unsaved?
5. DISCUSS: Under what circumstances is our response similar to that of Jonah's?



"I CRIED BY REASON OF MINE AFFLICTION UNTO THE LORD, AND HE HEARD ME; OUT OF THE BELLY OF HELL CRIED I, AND THOU HEARDEST MY VOICE."

"I WENT DOWN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE MOUNTAINS; THE EARTH WITH HER BARS WAS ABOUT ME FOR EVER; YET HAST THOU BROUGHT UP MY LIFE FROM CORRUPTION, O LORD MY GOD."

- JONAH 2:2-9

F. THE RESPONSE OF DAVID - In the Death of a Child

The loss of David's child is often referred to in times of mourning at the death of a loved one, especially in the loss of a child. David's response to the loss of his child is so uplifting that this has led to questions concerning the salvation of that child and/or of any child. Read II Samuel 12:7-25 for the complete context of the story.

1. Why *did* God take the life of the child from David? (12:14) Why did David continue to petition for the life of the child? (12:16-17, 22)
2. Is the significance that the child who died was never referred to by name connected to the fact that the child died on the seventh day (12:18)? (Gen. 17:11-14; Lev. 12:3) Compare this to II Sam. 12:24-25.
3. What was David's response when his petition was not granted? (12:19-20) Why is this so beautiful?
4. The phrase in 12:23b, "*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me,*" is often used to assume that David will join the child in heaven some day, giving hope to *all* the parents who have lost a child in the early stages of life. Does this assumption find consistent Biblical support? Psalm 58:3; Is. 48:8; Compare to Is. 49:1
 - a. Does the phrase in II Sam. 12:23b simply imply that the child is in the grave, a place that all must face someday, and *that is* where David would join the child? Gen. 37:34-35; Job 7:8-10
 - b. Does scripture support that a child of God can find comfort at the time of loss of a child in thinking that his/her soul *is in* heaven? Is. 59:21; I Cor. 7:14; Acts 2:38-39 (Canons of Dort – Article 17)
 - c. David's response never questioned God's sovereignty. He wrote in Psalm 139, "*My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret...*" Worship as you focus on his response found in 139:7-17.