

DOES GOD HEAR A SINNER'S PRAYER? JOHN 9:31
(Matt 4:24-38)

INTRODUCTION: THE DANGER OF TAKING A TEXT OF SCRIPTURE OUT OF ITS CONTEXT. BY DOING THIS WE CAN TEACH THAT

THERE IS NO GOD, PS. 14:1

GOD HAS FORGOTTEN HIS PEOPLE, ISA. 49:14

THAT WE OUGHT TO WORSHIP THE DEVIL, MT. 4:9

THIS WILL NEVER DO. BEFORE WE START TO BUILD A DOCTRINE ON ANY ONE TEXT OF SCRIPTURE, WE MUST FIND OUT WHO SAID IT, ON WHAT OCCASION, WHAT HE MEANT BY IT, WHETHER GOD ENDORSED IT OR NOT, ETC., AND HOW IT COMPARES WITH OTHER SCRIPTURE.

THE TEXT IN JOHN 9:31 IS THE SAYING OF A CERTAIN BLIND MAN WHO WAS FAR FROM BEING WELL INSTRUCTED. IT MAY BE TAKEN FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH AS AN EXPRESSION OF HIS OPINION, BUT IT IS CERTAINLY NOT TO BE REGARDED AS CHRIST'S TEACHING.

FOR ITS REAL VALUE WE MUST COMPARE IT WITH OTHER SCRIPTURE.

1. IT IS NOT TRUE IN SOME SENSES.

WE CAN NOT SAY ABSOLUTELY THAT GOD DOES NOT HEAR A SINNER'S PRAYER, BECAUSE:

1. ALL MEN ARE SINNERS, AND IF GOD NEVER HEARD A SINNER'S PRAYER, HE WOULD NEVER HEAR ANYONE WHO PRAYED.

A. "THERE IS NO MAN THAT SINNETH NOT", 1 KINGS 8:46.

B. EVEN SAVED SINNERS ARE NOT PERFECT, YET GOD HEARS THEM WHEN THEY PRAY.

2. GOD DOES SOMETIMES HEAR AND ANSWER UNREGENERATE MEN WHEN THEY PRAY.

A. HE HAS NOT PROMISED TO DO SO AS HE HAS PROMISED TO HEAR HIS CHILDREN WHEN THEY PRAY, YET HE MIGHT IN SOME CASES DO SO IN PURE MERCY, TO MANIFEST HIS GREAT COMPASSION, AS HE HEARS THE YOUNG RAVENS WHEN THEY CRY, PS. 147:9

B. HE MIGHT DO SO TO SHOW THAT HE IS TRULY GOD, AND MAKE THEM OWN IT, PS. 106:44, "MANY TIMES THEY PROVOKED HIM, NEVERTHELESS, HE REGARDED THEIR AFFLICTION, WHEN HE HEARD THEIR CRY."

C. HE MIGHT DO SO TO LEAD THEM TO REPENTANCE, 1 KINGS 21:27, "WHEN AHAB HEARD THOSE WORDS, HE RENT HIS CLOTHES, AND PUT SACKCLOTH UPON HIS FLESH, AND FASTED, AND WENT SOFTLY."

AND THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO ELIJAH SAYING, SEEST THOU HOW AHAB HUMBLETH HIMSELF BEFORE ME? BECAUSE HE HUMBLETH HIMSELF BEFORE ME, I WILL NOT BRING THE EVIL IN HIS DAYS."

D. HE MIGHT DO IT TO LEAVE THEM WITHOUT EXCUSE, EX. 10:16-17, "THEN PHAROAH CALLED FOR MOSES AND AARON IN HASTE; AND HE SAID, I HAVE SINNED AGAINST THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND AGAINST YOU. NOW THEREFORE FORGIVE, I PRAY THEE, MY SIN ONLY THIS ONCE, AND INTREAT THE LORD YOUR GOD, THAT HE MAY TAKE AWAY FROM ME THIS DEATH ONLY."

E. SOMETIMES THE ANSWER TO THEIR PRAYER MIGHT BE GRANTED AS A PUNISHMENT UPON THEM,

(1). AS HE SENT QAILS TO THE MURMURERS, NUM. 11:33

(2). AS HE GAVE ISRAEL A KING, 1 SAM. 12:17.

3. GOD DOES GRACIOUSLY HEAR SINNERS WHEN THEY CRY FOR MERCY.

A. NOT TO BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE TO RENDER THE GOSPEL NO GOSPEL. ACTS 2:21, WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED."

B. NOT TO BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE TO DENY FACTS, SUCH AS DAVID, THE DYING THIEF, THE PUBLICAN, THE PRODIGAL, AND OTHERS.

C. NOT TO BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE TO DENY THE PROMISES OF GOD.

(1). ISA. 55:7, "LET THE WICKED FORSAKE HIS WAY,
AND THE UNRIGHTEOUS MAN HIS THOUGHTS;
AND LET HIM RETURN UNTO THE LORD,
AND HE WILL HAVE MERCY UPON HIM;
AND TO OUR GOD, FOR HE WILL ABUNDANTLY PARDON."

11. YET IN OTHER SENSES, IT IS TRUE THAT THE LORD DOES NOT
PROMISE TO HEAR AND DOES NOT HEAR THE SINNER'S PRAYER,
AS HE HAS PROMISED TO HEAR, AND AS HE DOES HEAR,
THE PRAYER OF HIS OWN CHILDREN. (1 PETER 3:12)
1. HE HEARS NO SINNER'S PRAYER APART FROM THE MEDIATION OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. 1 TIM. 2:5 - *ONE MEDIATOR*
EPH. 2:18 - *THROUGH HIM WE HAVE ACCESS TO THE FATHER*
 2. HE WILL NOT HEAR A WICKED, FORMAL, HEARTLESS PRAYER.
PROVERBS 15:29 - *the Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.*
 3. HE WILL NOT HEAR THE MAN WHO WILFULLY CONTINUES IN SIN, AND
ABIDES IN UNBELIEF. JER. 14:12 - *"I will not hear their cry."*
ISA. 1:15 - *"when ye make many prayers I will not hear."*
 4. HE WILL NOT HEAR THE HYPOCRITE'S MOCKERY OF PRAYER.
JOB 27:9 - *"... the hope of the hypocrite... will God hear his cry?"*
 5. HE WILL NOT HEAR THE UNFORGIVING.
MK. 11:25, 26 - *"If you do not forgive, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*
 6. HE WILL NOT HEAR EVEN HIS PEOPLE WHEN SIN IS WILFULLY
INDULGED IN AND ENTERTAINED IN THEIR HEARTS.
PSALMS 66:18 - *"If I regard iniquity in my heart..."*
 7. HE WILL NOT HEAR THOSE WHO REFUSE TO HEAR HIS WORD, OR
TO REGARD HIS ORDINANCES. PROV. 28:9 - *his prayer shall be an abomination.*
 8. HE WILL NOT HEAR THOSE WHO HARDEN THEIR HEARTS AGAINST THE
ADMONITIONS OF HIS SPIRIT,
AGAINST THE WARNINGS OF HIS PROVIDENCE,
THE APPEALS OF HIS MINISTERS,
THE STRIVINGS OF CONSCIENCE, ETC.
PROV. 1:24-28
 9. HE WILL NOT HEAR THOSE WHO REFUSE TO BE SAVED BY GRACE,
OR WHO TRUST IN THEIR OWN PRAYERS AS THE CAUSE OF SALVATION.
 10. HE WILL NOT HEAR SINNERS WHO DIE IMPENITENT.
A. AT THE LAST HE WILL CLOSE HIS EAR TO THEM, AS TO THE
FOOLISH VIRGINS, WHO CRIED, "LORD, LORD OPEN TO US."
B. NOTHING IS SO ILLOGICAL, SO UNNATURAL, SO PRESUMPTUOUS
AS FOR AN IMPENITENT SINNER TO PRESUME OR DARE TO PRAY
TO GOD AND YET CONTINUE IMPENITENT AND REBELLIOUS.
IT IS UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED THAT REBELLION AGAINST ANY
GOVERNMENT CUTS OFF ALL RIGHT OF PETITION TO IT.
THE FACT THAT GOD IS GOOD, KIND, AND LOVING, OR
THE FACT THAT ~~HE~~ ^{ONE} IS IN GREAT TROUBLE,
DOES NOT EXCUSE HIS IMPENITENT AND PRESUMPTUOUS PRAYER.
THE ONLY PRAYER A SINNER HAS A RIGHT TO PRAY,
AND THE ONLY PRAYER GOD HAS PROMISED TO ANSWER,
IS A PRAYER FOR MERCY AND FORGIVENESS FOR SIN
THROUGH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

H. M. 2/27/55