

## Examples of how God answered the prayers of Biblical Characters. Sept28,

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I have had God answer my prayers and it has amazed me in the way that He brought about the blessings in my life to my petitions. Yet other times, I have prayed and asked time and time again for things that I felt was good and acceptable and it seemed like heaven's door was shut and no one heard my cry. Today I want to take you through some Scriptures that deal with how God responded to people's prayers throughout the history of the Bible.

Turn with me to Deuteronomy chapter 3. Here is Moses seeking the will of God concerning conquering the land leading into the Promised Land. God told him to move forward and not to fear for God would give him victory in every battle. In verse four it said that the Israelites took all of the cities at that time and there wasn't a city left remaining that was not conquered. Moses gave the land to the children of Israel to possess and gave instructions to them concerning the journey crossing the Jordan River. Moses commanded Joshua to look at the victory that God had given to them concerning the heathen kings and Joshua was not to be afraid to go into the Promised Land because God would fight for him.

In verse 23, there is a very interesting scene. Moses prayed to the Lord concerning his future. This is his prayer: "O Lord God, you have begun to show your servant your greatness, and your mighty hand; for what God is there in heaven or in earth that can do according to your might? I pray to you that you will let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon."

He told the people that God was angry with him for their sakes and wouldn't hear him for God told him, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter. Get you up into the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward and behold it with your eyes; for you shall not go over this Jordan. But charge Joshua and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you shall see."

In Deuteronomy 34, Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo to the top of Pisgah that is over against Jericho. He looked over the land, north, south, east and west and God told him that this was the Promised Land that was given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for their inheritance and for their descendents. Moses saw the city of palm trees near Zoar. The Lord told him that he had allowed him to enjoy the view of it and he could be sure that the Children of Israel would inhabit it but he would not be able to enter it with them. In verse 5, it reads: So Moses, the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab over against Bethpeor: but no man knows of his sepulcher unto this day.

Moses was 120 years old when he died and his eyes had not dimmed nor his natural force abated. He still had his strength and stamina of a younger man.

In Mark 9:2, Jesus took Peter, James and John and led them up into a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. Moses at this time entered the Promised Land to communicate with Jesus Christ.

In the Book of Ruth, Naomi left Bethlehem with her husband and two sons and moved into the land of Moab because of a famine. Perhaps they intended to stay for a short period of time, but the famine lasted for a few years. Ruth's sons grew and both of them married women from Moab. One married Orpah and the other married a woman named Ruth. They lived there for approximately 10 years when Naomi's husband died and both of her sons died also. She then heard that once again God had visited his people and allowed the ground to yield forth food for his people. Naomi tried to convince her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab and to go back to their own people for she was now too old to find husbands for them and she felt at loss as to how she would provide for them. She didn't know how she was going to provide for herself as she would have to have someone pay the money that was owed on her land in order for her to be able to reclaim it. It was just so overwhelming and the idea of having two young women with her was too much for her to think about. She had nothing to offer them. Orpah returned to her family, but Ruth refused to leave Naomi's side. She was committed to her and to her people as well as her God and she would not turn back. Naomi had lost all hope, but Ruth loved her and promised to take care of her. I'm sure Naomi wondered how that would happen. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the people were excited to know that Naomi had come home. In chapter 1:5, they said, "Is this Naomi?" And she said unto them, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full and the Lord has brought me home empty. Why then call me Naomi, meaning pleasant, since the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?" We don't always understand the ways of the Lord. Naomi didn't realize the blessing that God had provided for her in the form of a beautiful daughter-in-law, that people of the city would speak in terms that she was worth more to Naomi than 10 sons. Eventually, Naomi understood the goodness and the provision of the Lord on her behalf and Boaz, her near kinsman, married Ruth, redeemed her property and together they had a son for Naomi to hold and nurture. This son was an important link in the lineage of Jesus Christ, and Naomi saw the blessings of the Lord unfold on her behalf even though her bitterness had clouded her in darkness and it took some time for her to accept and to see the glory of the Lord moving on her behalf. We need to look up in order for us to see God's workings. Romans 8:28 reads, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are called according to his purpose."