

Prayer—God Told Moses and David “No”

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On June 12, I started a seven-part series about prayer. Today, is part three.

- Part 1—Talking to a Perfect Father
- Part 2—Faith and God’s Will
- Part 3—God Told Moses and David “No”

View God as a perfect Father

In the first two articles in this series, I recommended that we should view God as a perfect Father who sometimes says “no” to us. In last week’s article, I mentioned the following three statements.

- The child does not have jurisdiction over the heavenly Father.
- The child does not command the heavenly Father.
- The child does not have better judgment than the heavenly Father.

Let’s look at two situations where God said “no” to two famous people in the Bible.

God told Moses “no”

Moses asked God for permission to go see the promised land.

Deuteronomy 3:23-25—“Then I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying: ‘O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand, for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do anything like Your works and Your mighty deeds? I pray, let me cross over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, those pleasant mountains, and Lebanon.’ ”

God said “no”—telling him the reason for His answer.

Deuteronomy 3:26-27—“But the LORD was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me. So the LORD said to me: ‘Enough of that! Speak no more to Me of this matter. Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift your eyes toward the west, the north, the south, and the east; behold it with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan.’ ”

The incident to which God referred is found in Numbers 20:7-13. Notice a few of the scriptures.

Numbers 20:8—"Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield water."

Numbers 20:11—"Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with the rod."

Numbers 20:12—"Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, 'Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.' "

God told David "no"

David asked God for his sick child to live.

2 Samuel 12:16—"David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground."

Let's rehearse some background.

2 Samuel 11:4—"Then David sent messengers and took her [Bathsheba]; and she came to him, and he lay with her."

2 Samuel 11:15—"And he wrote in the letter, saying, 'Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die.' "

2 Samuel 12:13-15—"The LORD has also put away your [David's] sin; you shall not die . . . The child also who is born to you shall surely die . . . And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David and it became ill."

2 Samuel 12:19—"Therefore David said to his servants, 'Is the child dead?' And they said, 'He is dead.' "

Sometimes consequences for actions

- Our sins separate us from God (Isaiah 59:2).
- God's forgiveness removes the spiritual consequence for sin—by restoring our relationship with God.
- Although God removes the spiritual consequence for sin, He sometimes allows a physical consequence for our edification.
- Sometimes, our heavenly Father says "no"—because He loves us.