

When God Says 'No' After Promising to Move Mountains

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Sample of Content:

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Content:

It would be a lot easier to accept a negative answer from God if Jesus hadnâ€™t insisted on telling us about moving mulberry trees and mountains and receiving whatsoever one asks. But he did say all that, and when we donâ€™t get what we ask for, it leaves us feeling a little confused. We start to wonder why Jesus said it at all.

The easiest cop-out for this is to say that your prayers aren't answered because you don't have the faith of a mustard seed. Remember? There were conditions we don't quite understand. Really! does anyone know how much faith a mustard seed has?

And then, of course, there's the explanation that really has us scratching our heads. "God only gives us what's good for us. So if the answer is "no", then it's for our own good." It's hard to see how moving a mountain is good for anyone—but that was the example that Jesus used. Besides, He never mentioned any such conditions. He just told us (over and over again) that God would give what we ask for. And few of us can understand why it was for St Paul's own good that he had the afflictions he writes about. Yet God wouldn't take them away. Why?

Well, my cop-out isn't much better, but here it goes.

The next time you pray, stop and think about what you really want. If, for example, you decide a mountain is blocking your passage into the next valley, your real desire is not to remove the mountain. Rather, it is to remove the obstacle the mountain gives. So while you solemnly pace at the foot of the mountain, praying for its removal, take time to notice the gaping hole. It was there that God once let rivers pass through, and there you'll discover the answer to your prayers. Though the tunnel be dark and sinister, it does remove the mountain in a very personal and subtle way.

In a more identifiable scenario, Joe Schmoe (a landscaper for 23 years) suffers from unbearable back pains. He prays for relief but finds none. He loses his job and maybe even his house. He relies on the charity of others and a government check to survive. It really appears that his prayers aren't answered. But when he finds a hidden talent in landscape design and finds work with a national construction company, his back problems no longer disable his life.

Now let's look at something more complicated. Mary Martin has a four year old boy with a terminal illness. She prays and prays for his cure, but still loses her son. We could find all sorts of happy endings if this was a novel, but it wouldn't help console a grieving mother in like circumstances. But in this situation, we have to remember two things:

Her son was cured from all worldly diseases. He now enjoys perfect health with our Father in heaven. The mother is now forced into a new reality. One where she faces the fact that all human relationships are temporary. She must now accept the certainty of death, and let go of her attachment. It's a harsh lesson, but it is the tunnel through the mountain. Like it or not, it's the answer to her prayer.

These scenarios all have one thing in common- God's answer relies on the faith of those praying. It relies on their willingness to follow His divine plan. The traveler must venture into the dark tunnel, believing in his ignorance and God's direction. The landscaper must explore new employment alternatives. The mother must decide to move on.

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