

## Does God Hear me?

By: [Hesham Hassaballa](#)  
IslamiCity\* -

*What does it mean when a prayer goes unanswered?*



In the Quran, God clearly says that He will answer the prayers of those who pray to Him: "When My servants ask thee [O Muhammad] concerning Me, [tell them] I am indeed close: I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me: Let them also, with a will, Listen to My call, and believe in Me: That they may walk in the right way" (Quran [2:186](#))

In another verse: "Your Lord says: 'Call on me, I will answer [your prayer]" (Quran [40:60](#)). Consequently, I pray to God for everything in my life, big or small. If one notices closely, my lips are frequently fluttering away in silent prayer to God throughout the day. Most of the time, the Lord answers my prayers. Sometimes, He does not.

Recently, I asked God for something very, very important to me. I prayed to Him night and day. I got up in the early morning to pray extra devotional prayers before sunrise to make that supplication to Him. I prayed to God at times when the Prophet ﷺ said God will answer those who pray to Him. I prayed almost constantly for this particular thing. It did not come.

Needless to say, I was sad and disappointed. In the midst of my sadness, a barrage of thoughts and questions raced through my head: "What went wrong? Was it something I did or said? Is God angry with me?" In fact, I almost wanted to say, "Why?" Furthermore, my sadness gave way to momentary spiritual weakness in that I had transient thoughts of rebellion against God. I said to myself, "All this prayer, and it was not answered. Did God not hear me?"

No, God indeed did hear me, but He chose not to give me what I asked of Him at this particular moment in my life. The above exchange in my head was born out of the fact that I am a human being, subject to all of the weaknesses and hypocrisies of the human condition. The Quran told me that this is in my nature: "Now, as for man, when his Lord tries him, giving him honor and gifts, then said he, 'My Lord hath honored me.' But when He tries him, restricting his subsistence for him, then said he (in despair), 'My Lord hath humiliated me!'" (Quran [89:15-16](#)).

Now, thank God I did not say God has humiliated me. Also, thank God, I did not point an angry finger at the Lord and proceed to disobey His commands. To do so would be horribly ungrateful. How many blessings has the Lord bestowed upon me? They are innumerable. I do not want to be among those who "worship God, as it were, on the verge," as the Quran says, "if good befalls them, they are, therewith, well content; but if a trial comes to them, they turn on their faces" (Quran [22:11](#)). When the answer to my prayer eluded me, I simply put my head down in acceptance, still sad, and said, "All praise is due to God. God has decreed thus, and He does what He wills."

---

The truth is, the Lord neither abandoned nor humiliated me. According to the Prophet, when someone calls on God, one of three things happen:

(1) it is immediately answered (and I do not have a shortage of those prayers, thank God);

(2) the answer to the prayer is deferred to Judgment Day, when the supplicant will be handsomely rewarded;

(3) the prayer will block a calamity that is to befall that person.

Thus, in my case, either something bad was going to happen to me, but my unanswered prayer blocked it, or the Lord is saving the answer to that prayer for Judgment Day. Either way, I win.

The thing is, I frequently can't see that; I do not have Divine Vision. This is another trait of the human condition. I do not understand God's wisdom in not answering that prayer right here, right now. Hence, my sadness and disappointment. Yet, my role is to be patient with the will of God and continue to be a humble, devout servant. God will answer other prayers. Perhaps God will one day let me see the wisdom of His decision. He has done so already once before.

When I was a senior in high school, I applied for an honors program in medicine in which I would be guaranteed a spot in medical school after three years of college. My application was very competitive: a 4.0 GPA and a whole host of extracurricular activities, honors, and awards. I prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed. I was not accepted, and I felt the same sadness and disappointment then as I do now. Yet, I did not despair or become rebellious against God. Three years later, I was accepted to medical school without a bachelor's degree. In fact, I was the only one in my medical school class to be accepted right out of college.

I reminded myself of this during my recent sadness. While I do not understand God's wisdom, I have to trust that He has my best interest in mind, and that He will not do me harm. This is what God wants, and I have to be patient.

Even though this prayer was not answered immediately, I will continue to pray. I will continue to try and get up before sunrise and pray those extra devotional prayers. I will, in fact, pray more to God now than I have done so in the past. God always hears those who call on Him, and I will live my life making sure He constantly hears my voice. And the most beautiful thing is, He never gets tired of hearing that voice. That is why nothing else in this world except He deserves to be worshipped.

*Hesham A. Hassaballa is a physician and writer based in Chicago. You can visit his blog at [www.drhassaballa.com](http://www.drhassaballa.com).*