



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



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I am disappointed every time I think about those who lack appreciation for our great country and the tremendous value attributed to its freedom. To get an idea of the price of freedom, consider this: The number of American lives lost during World Wars I and II is approximately 346,044*. Our service members have counted the cost time and again, standing fearlessly, even when the ultimate sacrifice of life had to be made. The history of the United States clearly reflects our determination to withstand forces of evil that would hold us captive and to embrace the freedom of others. It's the American way.

The desire for physical freedom comes naturally to every human being. Though it may slumber at times, it only needs to be awakened by the still, inner voice that cries out for release. The enemies of liberty have sought to silence this small voice by convincing many to accept substitutes (Those who buy into the enemies' lies ultimately find freedom has no substitutes.)

When we study the Bible, we learn about spiritual freedom, which is just as amazing as physical freedom. Spiritual freedom is a desire embedded in us by our Creator, God Himself, who thought it so important that He was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice so we could experience it. God loved us with an everlasting love. When we were weak and without strength from the bondage of sin, He sent His Son to sacrifice His life so that every man, woman, boy, or girl who accepted His sacrifice would have true freedom.

American soldiers see their sacrifice as important for the benefit of families and our great country. If

they lose sight of the worthiness of those for whom their sacrifices have been made, few will offer their lives. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, knew those for whom He sacrificed His life were unworthy and ungodly. But in Romans 5:6, the Bible tells us He died for the ungodly. That included you and me. If it were necessary (praise God, it is not), He would even do it again!

The thief who would take our spiritual freedom comes to kill and destroy; but Jesus, who sacrificed His life for us, said, "I am come that they might have life ... more abundantly." (John 10:10) Spiritual freedom is true freedom because it releases us from sin. This freedom is indestructible; and it will never be restricted by any act of war, tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, or peril. And that is because, unlike our fellow-Americans in uniform who must repeatedly make sacrifices to maintain our physical freedom, our Lord made a one-time sacrifice which secured our spiritual freedom once and for all with the proclamation, "Whom the Son sets free is free indeed!" (John 3:36)

Dr. L.W. Edwards

*http://www.pbs.org/greatwar/resources/casdeath_pop.html; World War I American deaths: 53,513; World War II American deaths: 292,531; July 1, 2016.



Question: Why does God delay to answer my prayers or fulfill my desires?

Answer: God always has a good reason for His delays. We see this demonstrated in His dealings with the nation of Israel after her exodus from Egypt:

And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. Deuteronomy 8:2-3

Reason #1: We Aren't Prepared for the Gift

Israel could have made the trek from Egypt to Canaan in weeks; but instead God entered the nation in a 40-year wilderness wait-a-thon to humble, prove, and discern the character of her heart. The trip took 40 years in part because the people weren't ready to receive the biggest item on their wishlist. God wanted them to inherit Canaan; they said, "No thanks"; so God postponed the promise.

Imagine if God had given the people of Israel what they wanted when they were unprepared to enjoy it fully. That would be like giving a power tool set to a toddler as a birthday gift: the child would not fully appreciate the gift, and might even be hurt by it, until he grew older and stronger.

God follows the same logic with us. His delays (which I'll call "extended learning sessions") prepare us for blessings to follow. The barren wilderness of unanswered prayers and unmet desires, sprinkled with eye-stinging gusts of frustration, impatience, anguish, temptation, uncertainty, and despair, erodes our self-reliance and drives us in desperation to the Oasis of God. This is exactly where God wants us.

Reason #2: The Gift Isn't Good for Us

Sometimes God's extended learning sessions are due to the nature of the gift we requested from Him. He may withhold the desire of our hearts because (A) He knows it will not be good for us, (B) He knows it will not satisfy

us, or (C) He intends to give us something even better.

Again, consider Israel: *They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.* Psalm 106:13-15

With limited provisions available in the wilderness, Israel saw God provide manna for food and water for drink and cleansing. But touching and tasting these daily miracles was not enough. They wanted more, so God gave them quails for meat — so many quails that they grew sick of them. After all God had done for them, the people still failed to pursue God's best. They thought the best God had to offer was the handouts they took from Him; they failed to see it was really God Himself. Like a spoiled heiress, they sought the blessings of ownership but shunned the benefactor. [Keep Reading >>>](#)



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