

## DOES GOD EVER CHANGE HIS MIND

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We know God has a plan for the universe. He also has a plan for His people, a plan going back to the very beginning of time. In His infinite wisdom, it is a plan of redemptive love for His people. Since He is all-knowing and perfect in every way, why would He ever need to change that plan or change His mind? I may develop a plan to pay off my mortgage in 10 years until an unexpected drop in my income requires that I change my plan / mind, because I am not all-knowing. How could I know my income would drop. Since God is all-knowing, He should never have to change His plan or His mind. That would suggest He didn't know everything, which we know is not true.

Despite this fact, there are some examples in scripture of God changing His mind. We find one in Kings that describes a time when God did just that. In this story, Hezekiah is very sick and near death. He gets a visit from Isaiah who says to him, "Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die, and not live" (2 Kings 20:1). Hezekiah gets understandably upset and starts to pray to the Lord while bitterly weeping (verse 3). As Isaiah is about to leave, he gets another word from the Lord telling him to return and tell Hezekiah that "I have heard his prayer, have seen his tears, and I will surely heal him" (verse 5). **GOD CHANGED HIS MIND.** First, He tells Hezekiah he will die, and then He tells Him he will live! What gives? Did God suddenly realize He made a mistake the first time when He said: "you shall die", and then change His plan / mind? The key to understanding this story is when God says: "I have heard his prayer and seen his tears"! It seems God changed His mind in response to Hezekiah's sincere prayer. So can we assume that God will alter His cosmic plans every time we pray sincerely? To assume that would be to miss the point. His change of mind was not because of a lapse in judgment or a strategic error in His almighty plan for mankind. Allowing Hezekiah to live another few years probably had no significant effect on the outcome of the universe. I believe that God changed His mind / plan for Hezekiah because of His great love and mercy for His people.

Have you ever heard the argument that prayer is useless because God already has a plan with an anticipated outcome? That reasoning is false, and the story of Hezekiah proves it. You can also read about how Moses pleaded with God to withhold His wrath and anger against the Hebrew people when they built false idols to worship. God heard the prayer of Moses and spared a nation (Exodus 32:11-14). **PRAYER CHANGES THINGS!** We do not know the details of how prayer works, nor do we have the wisdom to understand the sovereign mind of Almighty God. Despite this lack of understanding, we should not abandon our call to pray. Jesus prayed. He even asked His Father to "take this cup away from me" (Mark 14:36). Friends, do not grow weary in prayer. We cannot know what effect they may or may not have. All we can do is trust they reach the ears of a loving, all-knowing Father, and leave the outcome to Him.