

Doctrinal Summary of Prayer: Common Reasons for Rejection-Personal Pride

In Job 35:12 Elihu identifies personal pride as a reason why God will not grant an individual's prayer request.

"There they cry out, but He does not answer because of the pride of evil men."

The words "they cry out" are translated from the Biblical Hebrew word יִצְעֻקוּ ("yitz-a-qu") which more literally means, "they perform the incomplete action to cry out for relief or deliverance from a circumstance that causes acute distress." The incomplete nature of the action identifies that those who cry out have begun the action and continue crying out because they have not yet received the relief they are seeking from their circumstance. The circumstance or situation they are in produces intense and sharp pain or pressure that puts the soul of the individual under great distress and anguish. Not being able to remedy their circumstance they cry out for help in an urgent request for delivery from their circumstance. The request to be delivered is made more urgent because of the pressure and pain experienced from the circumstance. However, just because an individual cries out to God for deliverance from their situation and its pain does not mean that He will answer their appeal to grant them delivery. Elihu identifies the principle that causes God's rejection of this urgent appeal from some as being because of personal pride.

The words "because of" are translated from the Biblical Hebrew word מִן ("min") which more literally means, "from the source of." It identifies the source from which something comes. This source can be a physical location, an individual person, or a reason. In this context personal pride is the reason from which God chooses not to grant the request of an individual.

The word "pride" is translated from the Biblical Hebrew words פְּנֵי גָאוֹל ("p'ney g'ohn") which more literally mean, "exaltation of faces." It is a Hebrew idiom that refers to an individual who holds himself in high regard, importance, or superiority over others. The inherent idea within this idiom is that an individual has elevated who he is as a person to level of pre-eminence that makes himself, his thoughts, his desires, his perspective, and everything else pertaining to him as an individual as the most important. Thus, it evokes the idea of an arrogant individual who is self-centered in all that he thinks resulting in behavior that is prideful. Though man may dare hold his head up higher than other men, he should not dare hold his head higher than God. However, those described by Elihu have dared to do so, showing no humility before God. The consequence of their exalted face is the production of inherently worthless character and behavior.

The words "evil men" are translated from the Biblical Hebrew word רָעִים ("ra-iyim") which more literally means, "ones who are worthless towards accomplishing a desired objective or purpose." The description of these individuals being worthless towards accomplishing a desired objective or purpose is based on their exalted face. Their pride has made them worthless to God's objectives and purpose for them as humans. Consequently, He will reject their prayer request because of their personal pride in order that they might be motivated to humble themselves before Him. This is greatly contrasted with God's response to the righteous whom the LORD answers, delivering them from their trouble (Psalm 34:17).

Nevertheless, God will reject the prayer requests of those who have exalted their face before Him and rendered themselves worthless to His purpose and plan because of personal pride.