

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER IN WAYS WE DO NOT EXPECT

(A personal testimony from one of our Bible course students)

I came from a good Christian home with loving parents; went to church every Sunday, summer vacations together, always had what I needed; but somewhere, somehow I went astray. I began getting in trouble in school at an early age and soon became in trouble with the law. I always wanted to be accepted and popular and the only friends I seemed to make were the bad ones. I started going back and forth to jail and off and on probation since I was 18 years old. I am 36 now. I often heard a voice inside me telling me it was time to turn to Jesus, but I always overlooked it. I was involved with several drugs. My parents always loved me and prayed for me. I would do good for a while and then I would always mess up again, and each time I would go deeper down. All the time my parents were praying for me. I had already been to prison one time and got out only to get on drugs worse than before. I thought I was having a good time, getting high everyday and the thrill of getting away with so much crime I thought I was on cloud 9; had a car, my own house, all the dope I wanted; I thought life was great. But then I went to my lowest point. I lost everything and went to drug rehab, only to leave and live on the street; while my parents prayed for me. I was on the street every day hustling for my disease, which was cocaine, I just could not seem to get enough, not knowing from day to day if I would have money for a room or for food. Lots of days I did not eat, and even got so low as to sleep in an old, dirty, deserted house, because I used all my money

for dope; living with low class people whose only purpose in life was to get another hit of dope and I was now one of them. I forgot all about the Lord and had to make my way back the hard way. I was raped, stolen from, almost OD'd, managed to lose everything I had and ended up back in jail. This time I prayed and asked God to save me, but on the day I was to be released I was planning on getting high and I said "God, please help me", and then an old charge came up and I am back in prison. See, God knew I could not survive another trip on the street and he was not ready to give up on me and he wanted to give me a chance to be with my family again. So His answer to my prayer and my parents prayer was for me to come back to prison. While being here I discovered that I have HIV. If I had not come back, I would have died from lack of physical care and drugs. But I believe God will help me and now I feel closer to my parents and I cannot wait to go home to them. I am thankful to be in prison because I know it saved my life. I never thought God's answer to prayer would be prison but it was and I praise him for it. I also praise him in my disease because I am closer to Him now and HIV may be what it took to bring me home to my family and to stay there.

MY NAME IS COCAINE

My name is cocaine-call me coke for short.
I entered this country without a passport.
Ever since then I've made lots of scum rich.
Some have been murdered and found in a ditch.
I'm more valued than diamonds,
More treasured than gold.
Use me just once and you too will be sold.
I'll make a schoolboy forget his books,
I'll make a beauty queen forget her looks.
I'll take a renowned speaker and make him a bore,
I'll take your mother and make her a whore.
I'll make a school teacher forget how to teach,
I'll make a preacher not want to preach.
I'll take all your rent money and you'll be evicted.
I'll murder your babies or they'll be born addicted.
I'll make you rob, and steal and kill,
When you're under my power. You have no will.

Remember, my friend, my name is "Big C,"
If you try me one time you may never be free.
I've destroyed actors, politicians and many a hero.
I've decreased bank accounts from millions to zero.
I've made shooting and stabbing a common affair.
Once I take charge, you won't have a prayer.
Now that you know me, what will you do?
You'll have to decide, it's all up to you.
The day you agree to sit in my saddle
The decision is one that no one can straddle.
Listen to me, and please listen well,
When you ride with cocaine you are headed for Hell.

--Author Unknown

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