

We have discussed why we pray and how we pray; now, we turn our attention to what happens when we pray. Starting today and over the next several weeks, we will look at biblical examples of the power of prayer. Please note that these are not just ancient stories in the Bible; these are patterns that we can follow today with the expectation that God still answers prayers.

- **Foundational Understanding: We pray _____ prayers because we serve a great _____ God.**

James 5:16-18 (NKJV)

16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

- **Elijah is an example of what can happen when prayers are prayed:**

1. _____,

2. _____,

3. _____.

– To pray an _____ prayer is to pray a prayer that moves God into action.

– To pray a _____ prayer is to pray with _____, with _____, and with _____.

– To be _____ is to stand before God with a pure _____ and with clean _____.

Psalms 24:3-5 (NKJV)

3 Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?

Or who may stand in His holy place?

4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol,

Nor sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD,

And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

- Truth: God is _____ to the prayers of righteous men and women.
- Don't ever think your lifestyle doesn't matter!

➤ ***Elijah was a man with a nature like ours...***

- Elijah was not some superhuman with special powers that caused his prayers to be heard; he was just like us.
- Yet, he prayed an effective, fervent prayer from a righteous heart and changed the entire nation of Israel.
- You can have the same results that Elijah had... if you can learn to pray the same prayers as Elijah.

➤ **The Timeline of Events**

- According to James, Elijah first prayed for there to be no rain, and there was a drought for three and a half years.
- It appears that the drought may not have been a result of God's word; rather, it was a result of Elijah's prayers.
- Question: Is it possible to pray prayers that touch the heart of God so much that He moves, not because it's His declared will, but rather because He _____
_____ the _____, _____ prayer
being prayed by a _____ believer?

1 Kings 17:1-2 (NKJV)

1 And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."

2 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying...

➤ **Without a Clear Word**

- When Elijah first appeared before King Ahab, it is not clear that he had a definitive word from God.
- Rather, it is clear that he appeared before King Ahab with a word from Elijah.
- He was so furious at the spiritual condition of Israel (the idolatry and pagan practices) that it's possible he's the one who decided that drought would come to the land.
- In his anger, he declared a severe drought – no rain or dew on the ground.
- The drought would not end until he, Elijah, decided it should end: "*Except at my word.*"
- According to 1 Kings 17, when do we see the word of the Lord coming to Elijah? After Elijah had decided that a drought was in order: "*Then the word of the LORD came to him.*"
- Elijah was so in tune with the heart of God, he was so jealous over the things of God, that when he declared this harsh judgment, God backed him up 100%.
- It's possible that Elijah _____ what should happen, _____ that it would happen... but God is the one who _____ it happened!
- The point: You don't always _____ a clear or definite word from God to get _____ with God – the effective, fervent prayers of righteous people accomplishes much.

➤ **With a Clear Word**

1 Kings 18:1, 39-41 (NKJV)

1 And it came to pass after many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth."

39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!"

40 And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!" So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.

41 Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain."

- This time Elijah has a clear word from God.
- If he would appear before Ahab then God would send rain.
- It doesn't get any easier than that right? If you have a word from God, you just simply stand back and watch God work. I mean, God has to keep His word, doesn't He?
- How easy for Elijah to prophecy, "*There is the sound of abundance of rain.*"

➤ **Praying it to Pass**

1 Kings 18:42 (NKJV)

42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees

- Umm... what is this? What is he doing?
- Why does he go to the top of the mountain and begin to pray?
- That's not necessary, is it? I mean, he has a word from God. You're just supposed to sit back and let God's word work, right?

- Elijah understood that God _____ on men and women to pray His word to pass.
- If God said that He would pour out His spirit on all flesh, why do we spend time praying about having revival and harvest?
- When God gives us a word, a promise, He _____ us to take that word _____ to Him, to _____ Him of His promise, until that word comes to pass.

1 Kings 18:43-45 (NKJV)

43 and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea."

So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again."

44 Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'"

45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel.

- At first, the prayer was not being answered.
 - Elijah didn't give up – he went back to God in faith.
 - After the seventh prayer, God began to bring His word to pass.
 - It didn't just rain – it was a heavy rain.
 - Even when you have a word of the Lord, God still expects you to pray the answer into being.
- **Conclusion:** *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man (or woman) accomplishes much.*
- **Homework Assignment:** For the next week, focus on praying some big prayers. Ask God to do great things for you, for your family, for your church, and for your city.