

# Pray for Rain!

- Wayne Dailey -

Founding Pastor, Bethel Revival Center

---

I Kings 18:41

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

Here's faith talking. After three and a half years with not rain, Elijah's speaking with faith. It's time for Elijah to move in another direction.

God stirs hearts and straightens people out to get them on the right road. His interest wasn't to dry up the country. It wasn't his program to cause a famine or a drought.

God had in mind a people that needed to turn from their idolatry back towards Him. Reasoning with them wasn't adequate.

## Attention Grabbing

So He worked a wonderful sign, sending down fire from heaven to consume Elijah's sacrifice. This opened a lot of hearts, causing the people to pay attention and turn back to God:

I Kings 18:38,39

Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

Some think God should never do anything to cause people to turn their hearts back to Him. But we see that it took action on God's part to turn them around.

Sometimes when we're praying, wanting to move the hand of God, we have to bear in mind that He will move.

Elijah could see how the nation was consumed by Baal worship. Israel had forsaken their God to serve idols. But he knew how to pray and seek God's face. He had told Ahab that there would not be dew or rain throughout these years, according to the will of God.

I Kings 18:1

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

## Getting Things Up and Running

God's plan was to restore, to bring back the blessing. Look at what He did to accomplish this. He had to work to bring them back to the place where they truly wanted to serve Him.

It's amazing how nearly an entire nation can turn away from God. All those people turned from God to take up Baal worship, fully aware that this was not the way God would have them go.

Now, this was Jezebel's doing: she wanted to destroy. What a wicked woman she was. We find out down the road that her life came to an abrupt end. She didn't sow all that evil without reaping what she had sown. In God's time and way, He would judge and punish her.

II Kings 9:30-36

And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.

You can't continually sow wickedness without it catching up with you. Jezebel should never have been in Israel in the first place, but she was. Not only did Jezebel sow much wickedness, but her husband, King Ahab, also sowed much wickedness.

And judgment had also fallen upon him:

I Kings 22:20

And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

I Kings 22:34:,35

And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot.

We see that neither Ahab nor Jezebel got away with their great wickedness of turning Israel against God.

You and I should always remember that what one sows is what one reaps. When you continually sows to evil, one day you will reap a whirlwind. One day it will catch up with you.

We should know that righteousness is the way to go, walking with God from day to day.

## **Suddenly, a Storm**

The sound of abundance of rain! The fire had fallen from heaven, and the people fell on their faces in repentance, turning back to God. And now it's time for God to move. How long was the land going to be dried up? The drought had accomplished what God had in mind: now it's time for Him to move.

I Kings 18:42,43

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

Elijah went up to pray. He wasn't seeking judgment, but blessing. He was seeking for rain to fall once again on the land.

I want you to consider the power of prayer. I also want you to consider the relationship that some people have with God. Elijah had a very powerful relationship with God. He was one of those people that God talked and related to.

I think it's good when God shows us things, when He deals with us about things that we should go and pray about. We sing about the Lord sending more Elijah's to pray the power down; we also need to have those who will pray the rain down.

Don't you think it's time for a rain from heaven, a holy rain: a rain that the Bible calls the latter rain? It's the showers coming of the Holy Spirit that we should want.

## **Getting Through to God**

Elijah went up to pray. He had rain on his mind. As he went up the mountain, he said he could hear the sound of abundance of rain. He knew it was time to go and pray for the rain to fall once again. When he heard that sound, he knew that God was going to send the rain.

People get into various positions when they go to pray, such as kneeling down, sitting, or walking. Elijah cast himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees. I don't think I could get in such a position, but this is what Elijah did.

Then he told his servant to go up and look toward the sea. He expected the servant to see rain coming. The servant went up, looked, and said: "There is nothing." And Elijah said, "Go again seven times."

The sky was as clear and blue as could be, without any sign of a cloud.

Would you like to know that it made a real difference when you prayed? Elijah's prayers made the difference. He seemed to know what to do: he told the servant to go seven times, look out over the water, and come back each time to tell him what he saw.

Elijah expected things to happen when he prayed. And here he believed something would happen now.

The servant went and came back, went and came back again, went and came back yet again: but Elijah was steadfast. He would pray and believe what he said would come to pass; that there would be an abundance of rain.

He's believing. He's expecting God to do it.

I Kings 18:44

And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

A little cloud the size of a man's hand: that certainly doesn't look like anything is about to happen. Yet it's more than anything that's happened in the past three and a half years.

That little cloud wasn't very promising, but at least it was a sign. And Elijah took that. He embraced it as meaning that something was happening while he was praying.

Sometime when you are praying, you'd do well if you prayed expecting something was taking place as you prayed: not later, but now. You should always be in the realm where you're expecting God to hear and answer prayer.

How quickly a situation can change!

I Kings 18:45,46

And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Elijah believed rain would come. In faith he heard the sound of abundance of rain, assuring himself that God was going to send rain.

Notice that there was nothing out there when he started to pray. The servant came back six times telling him that he saw nothing, nothing but blue skies and blue water. But the seventh time he came back to say he saw a small cloud the size of a man's hand. When Elijah heard that he knew rain was on its way.

Most of us aren't programmed in our thinking to find meaning in the little things. What would you have said if you were told there was a small cloud the size of a man's hand?

"There's no use in praying. Nothing's out there."

But that little sign was enough to tell Elijah that the rain was on its way. He sent word to Ahab to get in his chariot so that the rain wouldn't stop him. The heavens turned black with clouds: there was a great rain.

You see the goodness of God. He could have punished them severely for what they did in turning to Baal.

Now, Elijah's prayers touched God, and touched Him quickly: suddenly there was a great storm. All this happened in such a short time.

How long does one have to pray to get an answer? If you could pray and get the answer the first time, you can thank God. But if you didn't get an answer, you may have to go back and pray again. And if you still get no answer, you might question what you are doing or not doing that prevents the answer from coming.

Are you believing? Are you expecting? Are you praying sincerely, seeking God with your whole heart? Or, are you doubting?

James 1:6,7

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

God loves answering our prayers. He wants to answer your prayers. God wants to hear you calling on Him again and again and again. But He expects you to ask according to His will.

## **Praying Right**

James 4:3

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

You're not going to get anything from God that's contrary to His will and purpose. No matter how much you pray, how loud you shout, how many people you call to pray with you—if it's not the will of God, He won't answer.

We've got to pray in the will of God:

I John 5:14,15

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Now, Elijah prayed in the will of God and shut up the heavens for over three years. He prayed again in the will of God and opened the floodgates.

What if he'd had a heart attack in between those prayers? What if he'd dropped dead in between? Who would jump up and take his mantle to go to the top of the mountain and pray?

Well, it wasn't God's will for him to die yet, was it? But it surely was God's plan to work a mighty, mighty miracle in Elijah. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and there hadn't been for over three years! Elijah goes up there and prays for rain—and sees such a quick change take place!

It's good to notice the little things when reading God's Word. It isn't how big it is. It's the fact that it's there.

So seeing a cloud the size of a man's hand would mean nothing to most people. All that long time without any clouds of any size caused this little cloud to mean something to Elijah that day. He took that seriously.

Many want to see a sign from heaven. Would you call this little cloud a sign from heaven? It was a sign to Elijah. He had heard the sound of abundance of rain, and went up to the top of Mount Carmel to seek the Lord. Now the servant tells him that there is a cloud the size of a man's hand in the sky. Elijah told his servant to tell Ahab to get down quickly so that the rain wouldn't stop him.

## **You've Got to Move**

Ahab got in his chariot and began to head down from the mountain to go to Jezreel:

I Kings 18:46

And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Elijah was in the Spirit and started to run. The Spirit of God came upon him, and he outran Ahab with his chariot and horses!

Can you get an anointing to run? David was able to run through the troop and leap over a wall (see Psalm 18:29); and here Elijah outruns Ahab's chariot.

Now, we want God to pour out His Spirit in our day and send the latter rain. We want God to move: but are we willing to do what it takes so that we might receive a blessing from God, a great outpouring of His Spirit?

What would you do to really press your way forward to receive those things? Would you really give yourself to God? Would you consistently pray and seek His face? Would you stand fast in expectation until God did it?

Or would you go a little ways and then say, "Why bother? We prayed and prayed, and nothing's happened."

Sometimes in the spiritual realm it takes a man of God such as Elijah who will take the time to seek God's face until the answer comes.

If we're going to get through, if we're going to get the victory, if we're going to receive God's promise, we have to set ourselves to seek the Lord with all of our heart. We've got to be willing to seek the Lord.

Sometimes we've got to be willing to bear down, willing to put some time into it, willing to give it all we have.

We fall short when we don't stay in the presence of God until we pray a matter through. We need to pray, seeking Him out with all the depths of our hearts until we know that heaven hears.

Then we're able to get up and go home. We believed we prayed through: we touched God.

That's where we ought to be. Oftentimes this is where the need is. That's when we've got to stick with it, and pray without ceasing. To pray: giving it all we have, putting our faith in what we're praying. Believing God that we'll see what we pray for. Believing that God is going to do what we're asking Him to do.

This is what moves God's hand:

Matthew 21:21,22

Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

We need to show God that we're sincere; show Him our faith by pressing our way through in faith, believing that's how the answer comes. We stand firm, waiting in faith, believing, and knowing He will answer.

If we're going to expect that God will move, we've got to make some sort of commitment to give of ourselves.

I believe God wants to move. Don't you? Do you believe He wants to move in this last day? Or do you think God is blind? Do you think He sees what's going on in the world of our day? Understand that He does see all that's going on. He sees the conditions and circumstances that are of this day.

He's fully aware of all the wickedness and evil that's going on. He's aware of the sinful, ungodly things people are doing. He sees the compromising churches of the day.

And He knows what He's going to do about it. Now, God could empty the earth with one swipe of His hand if He wanted to. What did He do in Noah's day?

## See the Big Picture

Genesis 6:5-7

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

It's God's plan and God's purpose to save souls, for he's "not willing that any should perish." This is why He sent Jesus into the world to die on the cross, giving His life's blood for us.

II Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Listen, God loved the world so much that He gave His only begotten Son that we would be saved, if we believe on Him (see John 3:16-17).

Let us see the times that we're living in. It's time for us to be alert, watching and praying. I believe God's people need to be praying for more than their own needs and desires, more than seeking God's blessing for themselves. We need to be seeking God for lost souls.

Now, it's not wrong to pray when we have a need. In the day that we're living in, let's not be blind. What we see in this world ought to alarm us. The conditions that prevail ought to alarm us. We ought to be troubled about it.

It ought to cause us to get alone to pray and seek God about what we see.

Does God need our prayers? After all, He is God. He knows what He's going to do, what He will do and won't do.

But we should recognize that He works through His people. Prayer isn't something we should take lightly. Prayer does move and touch the heart of God.

I Timothy 2:1-4

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

When was the last time you prayed for your governor? for the president? for those who rule over you?



Why does God want us to pray? Why don't things happen without prayer? Listen, prayer will make a difference.

God wants to move these days in revival: but don't forget that He's going to move through a people. He's going to take those who are seeking Him, who believe Him, who will yield to Him—and He will work through them.

God will bring revival by our pressing our way and seeking after Him to move. I don't mind keeping revival in my heart and in my prayer life every day.

I believe God is going to send the rain! I believe He's going to cause the clouds to come. I believe God's going to cause the sky to blacken again and bring the rain. Only, I'm not thinking about natural rain. I'm thinking about the spiritual rain, the latter rain.

Here in Elijah's day there was an abundance of rain that would come to Israel because something happened to turn their hearts back to God.

Didn't it take an Elijah to work with God in bringing this forth? Didn't God have an agent He worked through? There weren't too many standing with Elijah in that day (although later, when Elijah thought there was nobody else serving God, God told him there were still 7,000 left who had not bowed their knee to Baal).

But, listen, when a nation turns away from God, it brings trouble to the land. Just think of the covetous, greedy spirit that prevails in the world of our day. Have you heard anyone say, "I've got enough now, let somebody else have some"? Their heart is not on loving and serving God. It's on prosperity and more prosperity.

And before we got saved we were part of that greed. Now we want to take what we have and share it with the less fortunate.

I'm not so much troubled about the state the world is in today as I am about something else. I'm much more troubled about the conditions of the church in America of our day.

The devil doesn't want the church to stand. One thing that will hold the church in place today is building on the Rock Christ Jesus. But the devil is striving to destroy the church, using people to fight against the church and take the knowledge of Jesus out of the earth.

He's ever at work to destroy faith in Jesus Christ, to discredit Jesus in every way he can.

Do you think America has a strong, spiritual heartbeat after God? We have to bear in mind that this nation and this world are in tough shape. What an evil time.

God has truly blessed our nation, but when is He going to punish it? When is He going to turn things around and bring His judgment on the ungodliness in the land?

He brought down His judgment on Israel in Ahab's day. All He had was a praying prophet who prayed that it wouldn't rain until they turned away from Baal and turned back to God.

If you asked Ahab back there he would have said everything was going just fine—until God put the pressure on. Understand that something needed to be done, and God would do it.

I don't think it's any different in this last day. God knows what's needed. He knows what can bring a country to its knees.

Remember, now, God controls everything. He controls which way the wind blows. Does it make any difference which way the wind blows? Was Jesus ever interested in the wind blowing? Did He ever do anything to stop it from blowing?

Didn't He lift up His hand and tell the wind, "Peace be still"? And didn't the wind and the waves obey His voice?

Who's in control?

Bear in mind there may be a lot of fattening of the hogs. The sheep and the cattle may be fat. There may be a lot of money set aside in the bank. But know that there may be days when God will just blow, and all that will blow away.

Remember in the days of Israel when they began to rebuild the temple? They laid the foundation, and then they quit so they could start building their own houses. They forgot about what they were brought back to Jerusalem for. And they let the work of God die on the vine while they took care of their own program.

Haggai 1:4-6

Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

Their pockets had holes in them. They'd put more and more money in, only to have it fall out. They planted their crops, expecting to yield a lot, but it got to the point where the harvest failed. One thing after another went wrong, as God worked to get their attention.

Their prosperity was going out the window. They weren't doing well because they forgot about God's house, forgot about what God brought them back to do.

Now, the prophet came along and exposed all that. They had never stopped to think that all of this was the hand of God trying to get their attention.

So the prophet prophesied that they should get busy building God's house, and God would be with them.

We will do well when we walk uprightly with God, keeping our hearts in tune to what He has laid before us to do.

We know that we are blessed with the blessing of God as His children when we give to God. Just think, we give of our substance to God, and He doesn't need anything! But He gave us the privilege of giving to Him:

Malachi 3:10,11

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

## **Being in the Big Picture**

Does He do it? Are you blessed? Let's remember where our blessing comes from. God wants His people to be blessed. He wants our lives to be blessed.

And our lives will be blessed of Him as long as we are following Him with all of our hearts, as long as we are walking in His ways.

Psalm 68:19

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah

Even though we may not always recognize His benefits some days, they're there. When hard times come in the country God can still load us with benefits.

He'll bless you in the good times and in the hard times. We have to bear in mind that God is the one who is our source. His hand is stretched out towards us. Our blessings are hinged on God's moving and working.

We need to be very careful that we do things right. Don't hesitate in giving God that which is His, for it does have an effect on lives.

There are all those promises of God's blessing: but we can't take them for granted. We have to walk carefully before God, doing things His way. We can't have the attitude that blessings will come regardless of what we do, regardless of how we live.

We need to be aware that our blessings come from God. We eat out of His hand like the little birds. He is our source, our supply.

Now, God does want to bless: but He doesn't want us to become greedy or covetous, with a life centered on money and prosperity. We can't serve God and money, the unrighteous mammon of wealth, materialism, gaining more and more.

We serve God with a heart of love, a heart that wants to serve Him and walk with Him day by day. Our true blessings are tied to our lives.

3 John 2

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

If your soul isn't prospering other things are going to fall apart. True blessings come in accordance with our spiritual prosperity.

I trust you know who your real blessing comes from. It's God who blesses His people. It's God who puts things in their pathway. It's God who puts things in your hands. Would there be any honor to God Almighty if He left His people in the midst of hard times?

I can testify that God gave us truckloads and truckloads and truckloads of food over the years when we had a Bible School. We fed a lot of young people at that time. We didn't charge anything, but we fed them every day through the blessings of God.

You don't have to compromise to get blessed, though many do. The enemy comes and wants to make it easy for them to get blessed. He takes the Word of God and turns it around, just like he did when he tempted Eve in the garden. And many listen to him, having no respect for God and His Word. We need to stand firm with God, and do things His way.

Know your blessings come from the hand of God: and don't let go of that. He has a big interest in us. He has His eye on His children. Think of all the blessings He has given in your life, and be thankful. He is faithful above all things.