



Introduction

James 5

We are in our penultimate study of the book of James. One more to

go after this. We end the book of James next week on Easter Sunday.

Now if you were with us last time, we looked at the beginning of this concluding paragraph of James. James is concluding his letter with a call for prayer. Why?

Because in a letter that is all about giving us evidences of faith, he closes with the greatest evidence. He closes with the slam dunk. What is it? It is prayer. There is no greater evidence. And that's not just homiletical hype. It's just a fact.

Suppose a man's boat is sinking at sea. That man needs a power outside of himself, an outside entity like the coast guard to come save him. What would be the evidence of that? He would get on the radio and call for help. That would be the irrefutable evidence of the location of his greatest source of hope.

And so James concludes his letter by saying, you want to know how to tell if you have faith in God? You want to know where your true hope lies. Do you trust in self-repair? Do you trust in your ability to bail water faster than it is coming in? Do you trust in your dingy of self-effort? Or do you trust in the life-saving power of the God of the Universe?

The evidence that you trust in God will be prayer. Prayer, prayer, prayer.

So last week, James said:

- If you are suffering, here's what I want you to do: pray.
- If you are rejoicing, here's what I want you to do: pray.

- If you are physically sick or spiritually weak, here's what I want you to do: pray.

And last week we closed with the first half of verse 16.

James 5:16, Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

The exhortation was to pray. Now today what James is going to do is inspire us that this is not just a spiritual exercise without a point. There can be tremendous power in prayer.

“The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”

And today we are going to see what it is that makes prayer powerful. Now to instruct us, he gives us an example.

James 5:17-18, Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. 18 Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.

Now here's what we are going to do. Let's first just tell the story that James is referencing. Then at the very end, we'll re-read James and I think the application will just drop right in place. So the story of Elijah and the 450 prophets of Baal comes from 1 Kings 17-18.

A little background. When we open up chapter 17, it's been about one hundred years since the united monarchy. The kingdom is now divided between Israel in the North and Judah in the South.

Ahab is King along with his lovely wife, Jezebel. Ahab and Jezebel, together, were on a campaign to try to and make Israel religiously tolerant. They have torn down many of the altars to YHWH. They have replaced them with idols to Baal who was a great rain god, a storm god. And Baal worship and Ashera worship was horribly immoral on so many levels.

And of course God is not happy about this. God wants to turn the hearts of his people back to him. So what does God do? Well, God's

leading prophet at the time is Elijah.

So the Lord sends his prophet Elijah to Ahab and Jezebel and in verse 1 we read,

1 Kings 17

1 Kings 17:1, Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.

Now why does God cause a drought? Because it's God's way of challenging the slick and shiny new god Baal that had become so popular. Baal is the god of the storm, the god of rain. So really he's saying, "Go ahead and pray for rain. Pray to Baal all you want. Pray it up. We'll see who's the Lord of the storm."

Because god is God, Elijah says, you can pray all day long and it will do ZERO because Baal does not give rain. YHWH does. And YHWH, BECAUSE HE IS REAL, has decreed ZERO rain until I give the word.

Now if you know anything about the climate of Israel you know that a drought of that magnitude never happens. Israel is a desert climate

and there have always been droughts but it always rains some. I pulled the weather data for Israel for the last hundred years.

All-Time Rainiest Year in Israel			All-Time Driest Year in Israel		
1944 was the rainiest year in the recorded history of Israel. The average annual precipitation was 74.2 cm.			2017 had the least rain of any year in the recorded history of Israel. The average annual precipitation was 18.6 cm.		
• Click column headers to sort					
Year	Rank	Precipitation (cm)			
2021	83	38.0			
2020	14	56.9			
2019	63	45.0			
2018	45	48.4			
2017	121	18.6			
2016	81	38.3			
2015	69	42.6			
2014	89	37.3			
2013	64	44.8			
2012	53	46.8			
2011	74	40.1			
2010	96	35.5			
2009	98	34.1			
2008	112	28.8			

The least amount of rain they ever received in the last 100 years was 7 inches (by comparison we get about 12 here). So here we are told in the text that they would receive neither dew nor rain unless Elijah spoke the word. That would truly be a miracle.

Israel is sitting right off the Mediterranean sea. You have this monster body of water and all that moisture just right there. You're going to get some rain.

And yet ZERO. NADA. And they wait. So the rest of chapter 17 is Elijah along with the rest of Israel suffering this out. This where you get to story of Elijah being fed by the ravens and staying with the Widow and raising her son and all that.

1 Kings 18

1 Kings 18:1, After many days the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.

Three years. This is way serious. So Elijah is sent to Ahab to put an end to all this. God is going to send rain and demonstrate that he is the God of the storm, not Baal. Now watch how this interaction goes down between Elijah and Ahab. A time is arranged for the two of them to meet and we read in verse 17:

1 Kings 18:17-18, 17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, Is it you, you troubler of Israel? 18 And he answered, I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father's house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals.

Ahab sees Elijah and sticks out his bony finger. You! You troubler of Israel. Elijah says, “Ha you think I’m the problem?!” No sir. You are the problem.

You have drug the name of YHWH through the mud. You have scorned his commands. You have worshiped other Gods. And you think I’m the problem? You’re abandonment of God has caused this drought, not me. I am just the messenger. I am the Postal worker handing you a letter.

Now if you pause for a second, what you have here are two interpretations of the same event. We both agree there is no rain. Why? Ahab’s interpretation is, it’s because of Elijah. Elijah’s interpretation is it’s because of Ahab. Whose right?

Let’s setup a little experiment which both parties agree would be ultimately conclusive. So here’s what Elijah suggests.

1 Kings 18:19, Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.

The question that is being asked is this, "Who controls the weather?" That is not a trivia question. They are all suffering. Deeply suffering. Animals are dying. People are dying. Crops are dying. This is not an inconsequential moment.

It's not a question of who controls the rain. It's a question of whose God can bring us salvation? Which God is real? Which God has power? Which God cares?

Let's setup an experiment to see.

1 Kings 18:20-21, So Ahab sent to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. 21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people did not answer him a word.

Now everyone is here knowing this is a contest. And Elijah confronts them before the contest starts. How long will you go limping between two opinions? Here's what Elijah is saying: There are only two positions, Israel. You can't logically stay neutral.

Either the claim of YHWH is true or the claim of YHWH is false. "Either YHWH is the one and only God or he is not. Which is it?"

Either there is one god or many. You are either for God or against him. You either believe his claims or you don't. Decide.

To be neutral, to not take a stand, is delusional. To stand in the swampy middle is to get the benefit of neither and to get the scorn of both.

You can't limp between two opinions. C.S. Lewis once said, "Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important."

Choose. Elijah is really pressing on this point. And apparently the logic silences the people. They see they are in checkmate. We can't say we believe in YHWH because if we believe in YHWH, then we need to do what YHWH says and YHWH says we are supposed to destroy the Baals and we like the Baals. So they stay silent.

The nation of Israel has become comfortable with a logical inconsistency. They have come to the point where they have said, "No, YHWH, he's a great God. We like YHWH. We will totally sacrifice to him. We also like Baal. We also like Asherah." And Elijah forces them to this uncomfortable point, "If you say you love YHWH then you must hate Baal and Asherah. There is no other option." They have no answer.

Elijah takes their silence as permission to proceed with the showdown.

1 Kings 18:22, Then Elijah said to the people, I, even I
only, am left a prophet of the LORD, but Baal's
prophets are 450 men.

So for starters that's not very good odds. Don't forget there's also 400 prophets of Asherah present. So we have 850:1. Not good odds. But this is the pattern of God. God goes out of the way to create these sorts of moments. He loves when the weak things of the world shame the wise.

So now we get the rules. Here's the contest rules. Here's how we compare in a fair and equitable way.

1 Kings 18:23-24, Let two bulls be given to us, and let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it. And I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood and put no fire to it. 24 And you call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the LORD, and the God who answers by fire, he is God. And all the people answered, It is well spoken.

In other words, we both get an altar. We both get wood. We both get a bull. But neither of us gets fire. The God who provides the fire is the real God. Who can deny that this would be the great evidence of which God is real? I mean, that would pretty much seal the deal, right? Who could deny it?

1 Kings 18:25, Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many, and call upon the name of your god, but put no fire to it.

You guys are many. You should be able to do this a bit quicker than me. You guys go first.

1 Kings 18:26, And they took the bull that was given them, and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, O Baal, answer us! But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they limped around the altar that they had made.

After four hours of screaming and wailing they are answered with silence. Nothing. And so Elijah interjects and begins to help them interpret the silence. He says, maybe the problem is your lack earnestness and sincerity. I think you need to turn up the volume. And so Elijah who has a PhD in sarcasm, begins to mock them.

1 Kings 18:27, And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened.

And I imagine Elijah's sarcasm really just screwing down their resolve. Mockery has a way of shoveling coal into the engine that protects our pride. And they work themselves into a frothing, foaming mess.

1 Kings 18:28, And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them.

What a graphic picture. And how sad!

The gushing blood of self-destruction. This is the graphic end of all idol worship, self-destruction. It could be the worship of money, sex, power, image, acceptance, whatever.... You give and you give and you give yourself to your god and the price becomes steeper and steeper and so you give more and more. You give your sweat your tears, you give your blood, you give your life, you sacrifice everything and because it is no god at all, it will not answer you and will not deliver you and will not satisfy you. And you lay on the ground panting and dying and without life.

Look at the scene. Here they are after the full day is spent and still thirsty. They are cut open and dying. The sun is out baking their exhausted frames. And there is nothing. Why? Lack of sincerity? Lack of zeal? No. It's because Baal isn't real. At the end of the day, is not this the only question that matters? What's real?

Sincerity apart from truth equals destruction.

1 Kings 18:29, And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention.

So just silence. Blood all over the ground. Bodies passed out from exhaustion. Panting weak frames. No attention. No response. No answer. Just deafening silence.

So Elijah steps forward. Have you had enough?

1 Kings 18:30, Then Elijah said to all the people, Come near to me. And all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been thrown down.

Man, that's a statement. You see this altar you ordered to be tore down, Ahab. That was a mistake. Perhaps you have abandoned the very thing that could have saved you? Your discernment of what has worth is a bit off, Ahab.

1 Kings 18:31-32, Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be your name, 32 and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD. And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two seahs of seed.

And you can imagine Elijah, the sole prophet surrounded by thousands of people. And the sound of those stones clanking one against another.

1 Kings 18:33-35 And he put the wood in order and cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood. 34 And he said, Do it a second time. And they did it a second time. And he said, Do it a third time. And they did it a third time. 35 And the water ran around the altar and filled the trench also with water.

So let's just consider the odds:

- You have 850 prophets versus 1
- You have dry wood versus soaked wood.
- You have a dry bull versus soaked bull.
- And no trench of water versus full trench of water.

Elijah is in this incredible position of weakness and honestly foolishness. Why? You want to know why? So God can flex. God's gonna flex. It's a statement, "I want to show you just how in control of this whole thing I am. I want to demonstrate that nothing that happens is accidental. I want to demonstrate that at my word creation leaps into obedience.

God loves weakness. He loves to use weak. Who among us feels weak right now? Who feels drug down by life? Who feels like a failure and absolutely unable to do anything for God's kingdom. Well then you are perfect material. That's exactly who God loves to use.

The Prayer

It's now Elijah's turn. All eyes were on him. I'm sure the Baal worshipers are licking their jobs. There are some people sharpening their spears. And I'm sure Elijah is thinking, "I hope this works."

The other prophets danced. They screamed. It was a frenzy. There was potions and screaming and cutting. It would have been chaos to watch.

By contrast. One prophet. And Elijah does no ritual. He just talks conversationally to God. And here is what he prays:

1 Kings 18:36, And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word.

Next comes the most explicit purpose statement in all the story. We'll come back to it but just read it for now.

1 Kings 18:37, Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that
this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and
that you have turned their hearts back.

So that's the prayer. The prayer is TWO SENTENCES. I just love that. TWO SENTENCES. The prophets of Baal have been at it for FOUR HOURS and Elijah prays TWO SENTENCES. And now it's just quiet.

Now, I want you to think about what everyone at this point is likely expecting. Why did they setup this contest? They are wanting what? They are wanting rain. And so they said, "He who answers by fire is the true God."

So what do you think they were expecting? Or to say it another way, in what form do you think they expected the fire to come? Lighting, right. I think they would have expected the clouds to slowly build. Okay the clouds are rolling in. They are getting thicker and thicker.

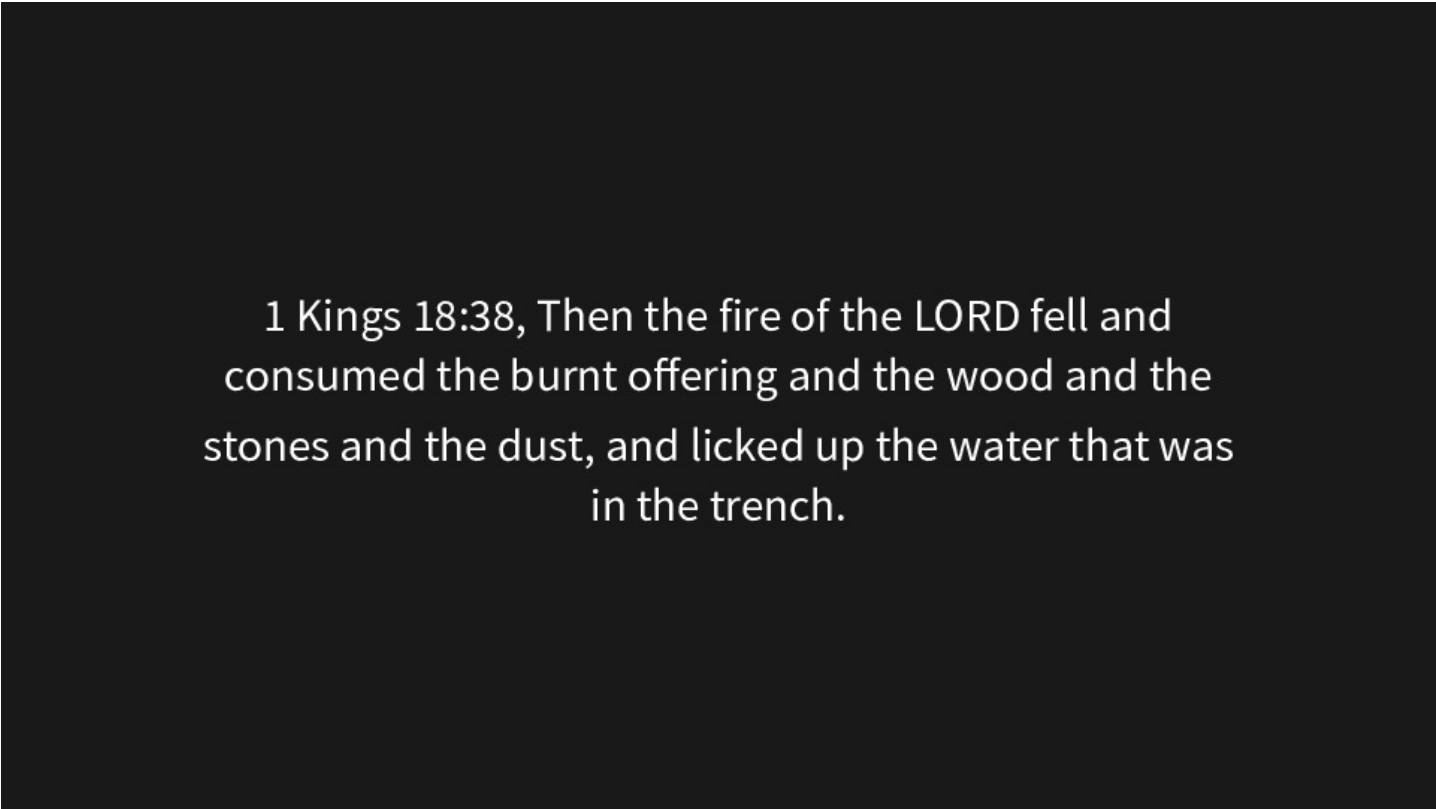
That's what everyone wants. We want the gods to break the drought. Now let's just say the clouds start rolling in. Everyone gets excited, "One of them is answering." **But the question is, "Which

God is causing this to happen?*** That's the great question, right?
Whose the God of the rain?"

And so the lightning is going to answer. Strike the altar of Baal. He's God. Strike the altar of Elijah, YHWH'S God. That's what everybody is expecting. Who knows, maybe even Elijah is expecting this.

But God wants it to be totally clear. I don't want this to be a guessing game or maybe that this is some rando accidental stray lightning bolt.

After Elijah's two sentence prayer out of the CLEAR BLUE SKY...



1 Kings 18:38, Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

The bull. The wood. The water. The stones — even the stones.
Consumed in a flash.

1 Kings 18:39, And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God.

You can kind of imagine the shock, the surprise, the terror. Can you imagine the freakin scene? You have all these prophets and their knees turn to jelly and they fall with their face in the sand.

Just zoom out and observe the the dual:

Over here you have the side of Baal. You have the prophets peeling their faces off the dirt with mouths wide open. They have blood dripping down their arms. You have the altar with this giant bull and the blood is dried on his fur and his tongue is just hanging out of his mouth and there are flies just buzzing around. That's Baal.

And then you have the side of YHWH. And there's just a smoldering hole in the earth where the soaked animal, on the soaked wood on the soaked stones once stood.

And there's one man, Elijah, with fire in his eyes. Dang. That would leave an impression.

Now what was the purpose of this whole deal? We said we'd come back to verse 37: There are two purposes for this miracle.

1 Kings 18:37, Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that
this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and
that you have turned their hearts back.

Purpose #1. YHWH is God.

- YHWH is not an idea.
- YHWH is not folk tradition or a memory.
- YHWH is not a figurehead of some religion.
- YHWH is not something that exists only in the imagination.
- YHWH is not a cultural expression of a particular people group.
- YHWH is not a force. He's not a symbol.
- YHWH is GOD — the living, active, fire-sending, sin-hating, idolatry-destroying, prayer-hearing, personal God.

“when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, The LORD, he is God”

Purpose #1 accomplished. There was a second purpose. Purpose #2 was that “that this people may know that you have turned their

hearts back.”

Cause the people of Israel to know that God did it. Let's make a really clear distinction between what they did and what God did. Here's what they did.

- Their hearts ran after the Baals and Asheroths.
- Their hearts betrayed God.
- Their hearts Spurned God.
- Their hearts Belittled God.
- Their hearts loved other things more than God.
- Their hearts had Devalued God. That's what they did

And here's what God did. God intervened. He showed his power. He flexed. He turned them back. God saved. God rescued. God did it.

That's the point of the story. Hang on to that as we come back to James.

Now the prophets of Baal are rounded up and executed. Even though it is not explicitly stated in the text, my guess is that this was a pre-agreed upon arrangement. The prophets of the losing god die.

1 Kings 18:40, And Elijah said to them, Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there.

Whose doing the seizing? Elijah was by himself, remember?

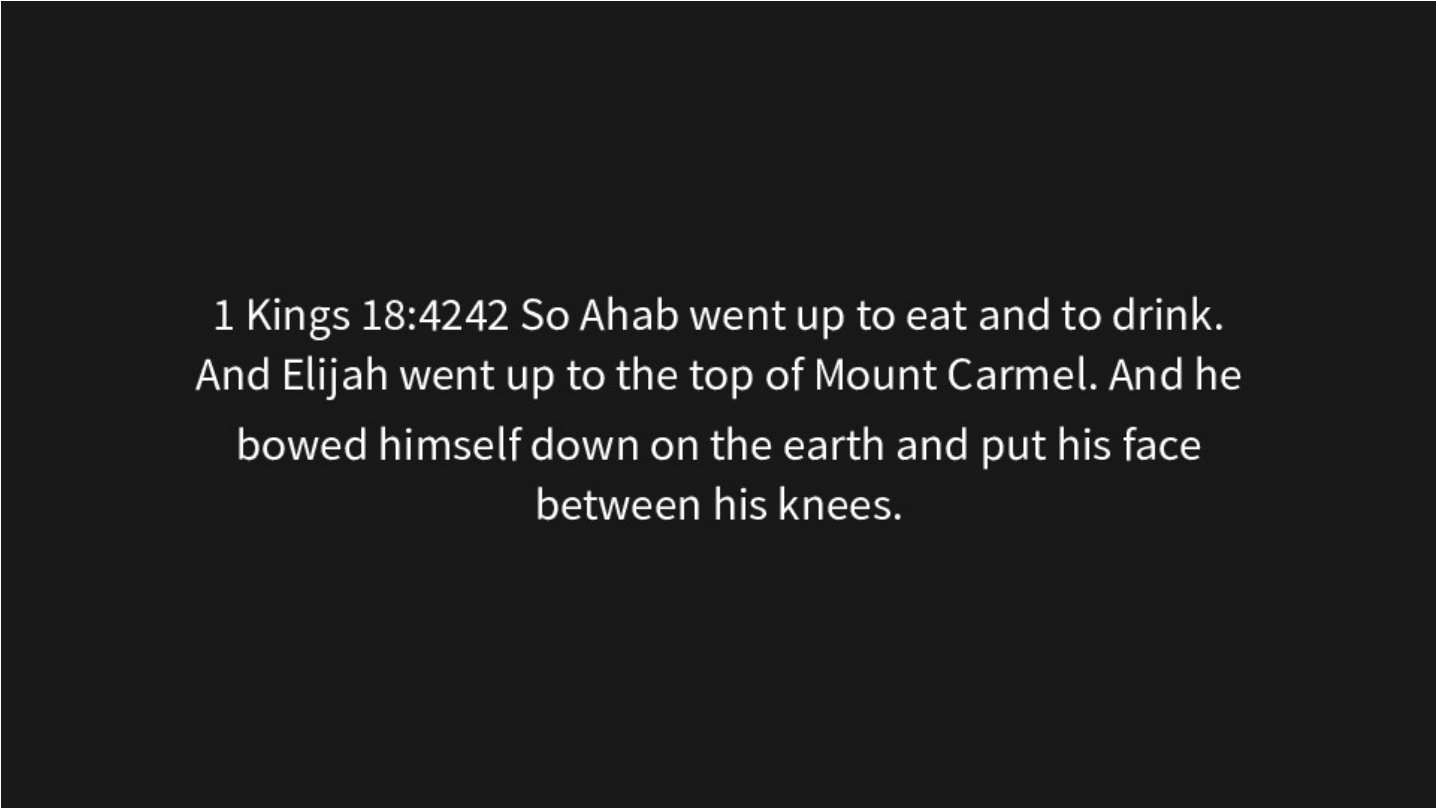
Answer: the people whose hearts have been turned back! Part of repentance is destroying whatever God you had been worshiping. Now God had promised that there would be rain that day. And now we can almost taste it.

1 Kings 18:41, And Elijah said to Ahab, Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of the rushing of rain.

God said it would rain. But just because God says something is ABSOLUTELY going to happen, doesn't mean vehicles aren't necessary to make it happen.

I can decide to go to Costco, but I need a vehicle. Right? God says it will rain. He chooses to do it through the vehicle of Elijah's prayer. Think about it: the OMNIPOTENT power of God is like a passenger who rides the vehicle of Elijah's prayer. So here is Elijah, a normal man, a common man, a man with a nature like ours and it's his prayer which becomes the vehicle that carries the power of the RAIN CREATING God of the universe. What?

What a privilege.



1 Kings 18:42-43 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink.
And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he
bowed himself down on the earth and put his face
between his knees.

He's dead serious. He's desperate. He's fervent. And he prays.

1 Kings 18:43, And he 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.

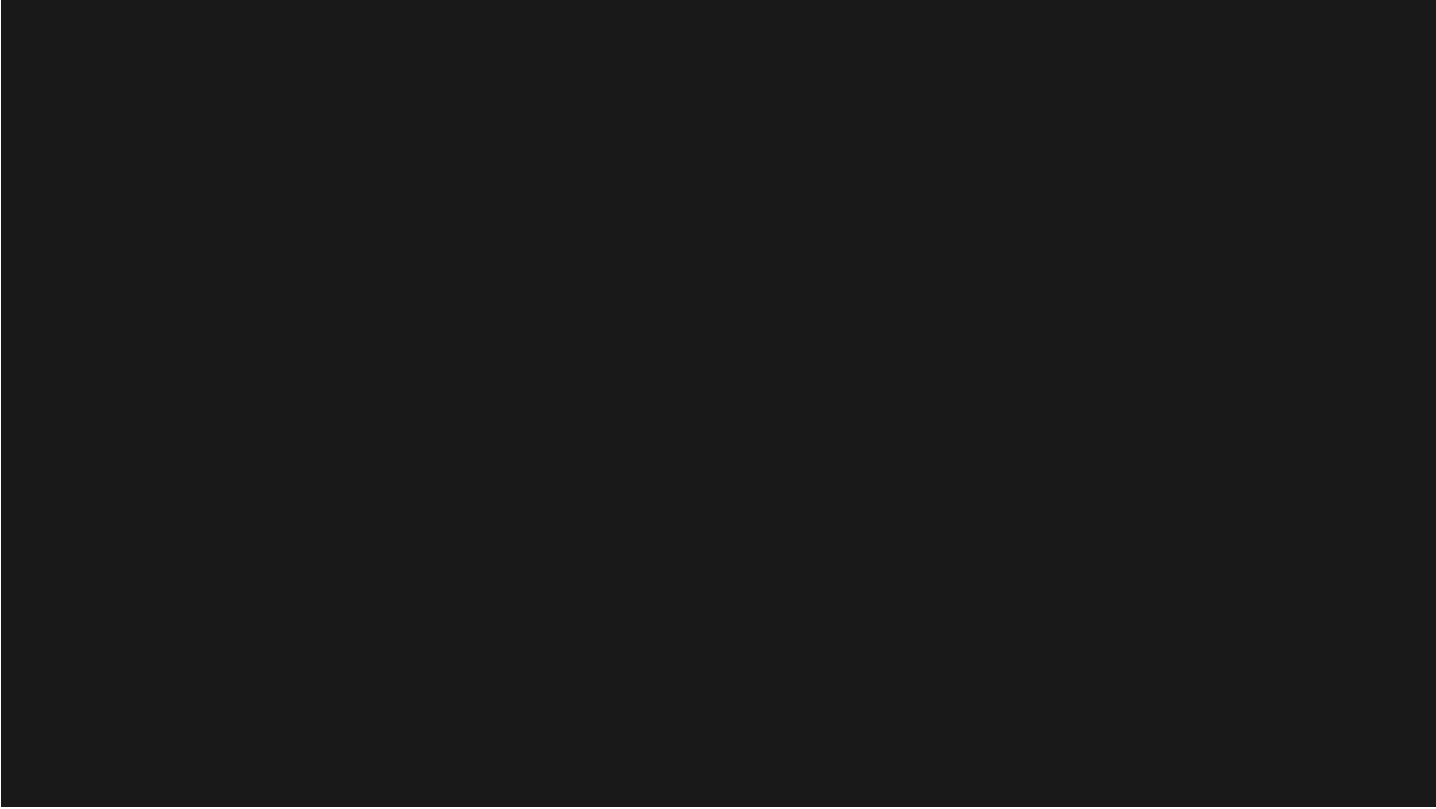
Now why do you think he got up and had his messenger look? Because he thought his first prayer worked. And it didn't. So what did he do? He prayed again. And why do you think he sent his messenger a second time? Because he thought, surely, now God will answer. It's time. It's past time. But it didn't. So he prayed a third. Nothing. A fourth. Nothing. A fifth. Nothing. A sixth. Nothing. But then finally it happened.

1 Kings 18:44, And at the seventh time he said, Behold, a little cloud like a man's hand is rising from the sea. And he said, Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.'

1 Kings 18:45-46, And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. 46 And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Okay, so that's the story. We needed to do all that work (and it wasn't really work; that was fun!). We did that review so we could apply our text today.

So let's go back to the book of James:



Now what is James' point here? James wants us to pray? You suffering? Pray. You joyful? Pray. You sick spiritually or physically? Pray.

That's what I want you to do.

Now because we are weak humans, we need encouragement. Have you ever felt like your prayers were ineffective? Have you ever felt like your prayers were not answered in the way you hoped. You ever prayed once, twice, three, four, five times and felt like your prayers did nothing. Well James is here to inspire us and to remind us of the power of prayer.

And you are asking the question, what do I need to do to make my prayers effective? James has an answer.

WHAT MAKES PRAYER POWERFUL

- Elijah was nothing special

I think this point comes as one of the greatest points of encouragement.

It's the same sort of encouragement a weekend golfer receives when he watches a PGA tour pro shank his drive straight into the pond. Okay, you are human. There's a sort of sick delight that comes from that.

It's not actually encouraging to watch top-notch excellence all day long because none of us can relate. That's not me.

- They are amazing. They can play the piano so fast I can't see their fingers and they never make a mistake.
- Those basketball players are freaks of nature.
- That Musk guy can build a company that shoots rockets into space, while also managing a boring company and a solar company and a car company and a battery company. Wow. I can't do that. I barely know how to change the battery in my smoke alarm.

We look at excellence and we say, “I know that none of this is attainable for me.” I don’t have the genetics. I don’t have the money, the educational advantages, the connections, the skills. I wasn’t dealt that deck of cards. It doesn’t matter how much I train, how much I dedicate myself. I’m too far behind. I could never be that.

- They are amazing. I am a loser.

But here we have this man, Elijah, and the first thing we are told is that the man Elijah had a nature just like you and I. There was absolutely nothing exceptional about Elijah. Here’s what Elijah was. He was human. If you are human you have everything necessary to experience the same world shaping power of prayer as Elijah experienced.

Folks, that is encouraging. Elijah’s prayer accomplished much.

WHAT MAKES PRAYER POWERFUL

- Elijah was nothing special
- Elijah was fervent

We see this clearly in the text. He prayed fervently that it would not

rain...

We see it. Face between his knees. Once, twice, three four five times. What is the place of fervency? Clearly, fervency is important. Do you remember the story of the persistent neighbor. The story is of a man who comes to his neighbor at night asking for break. And the guy's in the middle of his sleep and he's all warm in his blankets and he says, "Dude, go back home." But he keeps asking. And eventually, he gives in, not because he's a friend but because he's annoyed and wants to sleep.

Jesus commends persistence. He loves fervency. Why? It's not that Jesus wants to be annoyed. He can't be annoyed. The reason fervency honors the Lord is because it's a confident assertion of where help really lies. It's the great indicator that a "no" from God does not mean, "God has abandoned me, turn to other sources of help." When we continue to pray we proclaim, "Nothing else can help me. I have nowhere else to turn. It's the great proclamation."

The cry of a child to his parents, however annoying and disrespectful it may be, does say one thing loud and clear. You and you alone can help. I'm not going to go randomly ask some stranger on the sidewalk. I'm asking you mom, because I know you care. You want to know why kids at foster homes don't cry? Because they've learned that these care workers won't help me. It's pointless to cry. My persistence does nothing. My fervency is ignored. Persistent prayer is an indicator of faith. Persistent prayer is trust in the love of caring father.

It's an indicator of faith.

But persistent prayer by itself is not enough. Do you see the

fervency of the Baal worshippers. They were fervent. They got nothing. Fervency must be coupled with righteousness.

WHAT MAKES PRAYER POWERFUL

- Elijah was nothing special
- Elijah was fervent
- Elijah was righteous

The effective prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much.

I want to rescue this term from what I'm guessing you think it means. We use this term so improperly. We would describe a man as righteous and in doing so what comes to mind is law-abiding, a man who does good works, a man who abstains from evil. Its almost a synonym for moral. Disabuse your mind of that.

That is not how the Bible uses the word. Righteous means, **RIGHT WITH GOD**. If you are righteous you are right with God and if you are unrighteous you are **NOT RIGHT WITH GOD**. That's all the word means.

So when we talk about being someone who is self-righteous, what we are saying is that this person is trying to get right with God by

themselves. They are trying to make themselves right with God by their good works, by their performance, by their effort.

The Bible says there is only one kind of righteous person. The only way to be righteous is to receive a righteousness that is not your own. The only way to be righteous is to let someone else make you righteous.

You don't work yourself into a froth like the Baal worshipers to make yourself acceptable to God. God said to Elijah, I am going to perform this great wonder so that they may know that they will know who I am and that I turned their hearts back to me. In Elijah's day, that's righteousness. Acknowledge what God has done. The sacrifice has been accepted. He is God.

Today is Palm Sunday where we acknowledge Jesus Christ, the sacrifice, riding into Jerusalem to be nailed to a tree. What are we looking at here? God the father is saying, "I am going to perform this great wonder so that they may know that they will know who I am and that I turned their hearts back to me."

We are approaching Easter where God breaks jaws of death. We approach Easter where resurrection life is realized through this great wonder of the cross. We come to Easter to receive a gift of life that is not achieved through the frothy foamy self-righteousness.

Receive that gift and your prayer becomes a vehicle for the God of the universe.

The prayer of that man, that man who has received a righteousness not his own, that prayer of that man is effective.



FAITH *that* WORKS

THE BOOK OF JAMES