

I. Intro

A. Text: **1 Kings 18:41-46**

⁴¹ Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.” 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, 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. ⁴⁶ Then the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. (1 Kings 18:41-46)

B. Context

1. Prepare Yourself for Rain
 - a. Elijah Presented Himself to His People, Ahab
 - i. The True God Answers By Fire
 - b. Elijah Called For God to Rain Down Fire
 - i. Arranged the Altar
 - ii. Arranged the 12 Stones
 - iii. 12 pitchers of water
2. Fire Rained Down
 - a. Devoured the bull, the stones, dust and water
 - b. Pandemonium broke lose in the camp
3. **1 Kings 17:1**: Recall that Elijah spoke and prayed in agreement with God’s Word (judgment): No Rain!

- a. 3 ½ Years Without Rain
- 4. **1 Kings 18:1**: Rain!
 - a. We've seen fire, but still no rain.
 - b. God declared His Word from the heavens, but no physical evidence of rain.
 - c. Rain (**1 Kings 18:1**) was a Promise.
 - i. All the promises of God are Yes.
 - ii. Called those things that be not...

C. Rain's Significance

- 1. Rain represented the divine power and favor of God.
 - a. Expressed God's concern and provision for His people.
 - b. Israel, like the rest of the Middle East, was a barren and desert land.
 - i. Yet it flourished with vegetation.
 - c. God sent rain to Israel to display His Divine provision for a people who completely depended upon His power.
 - i. *Ps. 63:1-2: O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. ²So I have looked for You in To see Your power and Your glory.*
- 2. Rain Represented the Outpouring of Holy Spirit (3rd Person of the Godhead)
 - a. Highlighted God's concern and provision for His people who were utterly dependent on Him.
 - i. *Is. 44:3-4: For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on*

your offspring; ⁴They will spring up among the grass like willows by the watercourses.'

II. The Promise: Rain

⁴¹Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." (1 Kings 18:41)

A. The Sound That Accompanies the Promise (1 Kings 18:41)

1. Still no physical rain, but Elijah had heard a distinct and unmistakable sound.
2. The true God not only answers by fire, but He turns hearts.

a. Elijah's Prayer: *³⁷Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.* (1 Kings 18:37)

- i. Elijah's Prayer was not just for fire (which symbolizes judgment)
- ii. Prayed for fire that would result in a turning of hearts... back to God.

Repent (naham, metaneo): *change of heart, change of mind, change of view that results in a change of action.*

b. Fire Produced Results: *³⁸Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!"*

3. God promised Rain in **18:1**, but still no rain
 - a. The Realization of the Promise is often accompanied by the unique sound of repentance in the nation.

- b. Can you hear the sound of Repentance in the land?
 - i. Hearts turning back to God.
 - ii. Focus returning back to God.
 - iii. Perspective shifting back to God's perspective.

B. The Posture That Welcomes the Promise (1 Kings 18:42)

⁴¹ Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.” 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. (1 Kings 18:41-42)

- 1. Ahab, you go eat and drink (do normal stuff)
 - a. But I ain't got time for all that.
 - i. Elijah heard the sound that accompanies the rain, but still no rain.
- 2. Separated himself to enjoy some private time with God.
 - a. He bowed and placed his face between his knees.
 - b. Intense, intimate time communing with God.
 - c. Is this a picture of effective, fervent prayer?
 - i. James 5:16b-18a: “...The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. 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. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain,...”
- 3. Elijah Persevered in this peculiar position of prayer.
 - a. Praying... But his prayer position resembled the birthing position.

- b. Waiting and agreeing with God in prayer about His promises.
 - i. Strikingly similar to anticipating the birth of a child.
 - ii. Know it's coming, but you may want to get in the proper position to receive.
 - iii. What God is doing in and through you is fostered by the posture of fervent prayer, humility and dependence.
 - iv. Position of fervently trusting and abiding in the vine.

4. Elijah Persisted in Prayer for the Promise of God (**1 Kings 18:43-44**)

⁴³ and [Elijah] 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!” (**1 Kings 18:43-44**)*

- a. He heard the sound (repentance)
 - i. Got in the position of expectancy
- b. Stood on what God said.
- c. Do you see anything yet?
 - i. Seven times
- d. God’s Promise may not look like much to the casual observer.
 - i. Still no rain. But a small cloud rising out of the sea.
 - ii. Not much to the eye.

C. The Results That Distinguish the Promise (1 Kings 18:44-46)

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.’”

1. When the Supernatural Power of God Falls, our innovative, natural methods often become obsolete.
 - a. Ahab, you might want to roll out while your chariot can still roll.
 - i. Your powerful chariot means nothing when the rain falls.
 - ii. Convenient, man-made constructions cannot compare to what God does in His supernatural way.
 - b. Instead of the rain empowering, when the rain falls it may stop you and your naturally powerful vehicle in its tracks.
 - i. Your “You do your best and God will do the rest” is a fallacy in the Presence of God (when He makes it rain).
2. When the Supernatural Power of God Falls, human, meager and weak vessels are often used as conduits to display His glory.

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. ⁴⁶ Then the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. (1 Kings 18:45-46)

- a. The rain fell and it was heavy!
 - i. Ahab was long gone on his chariot by the time that the rain came.
- b. When the rain came =The hand of the Lord came upon Elijah

- c. Just about everywhere in the Bible where you see the phrase, “the hand of the Lord came upon” (the Spirit of the Lord came upon), the extra-ordinary follows.
 - i. When the rain fell, God did in and through Elijah what could have never been done in his own strength.
- d. Elijah girded up his loins and he outran Ahab’s chariot.