

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
3RD-5TH GRADE
TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 7

Prayer for Rain



Prayer for Rain

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach the students that God works through our prayers. He wants us to pray and to keep praying.

Key Verses

1 Kings 18:41-19:3—Main Teaching Passage

James 5:16-18

Luke 11:5-13

Memory Verse - Luke 11:9

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, James 4:8

Ask the kids, "Have you ever prayed for something and nothing seemed to happen? How did that make you feel? What did you do?"

Today we are going to learn the important lesson that God doesn't want us to be discouraged when we pray. Instead, He wants us to keep praying, trusting Him and His timing for the answer.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Elijah had told Ahab that the God of Israel was the living God, and declared that there would be no rain. Now, after three and a half years of no rain and a contest on Mt. Carmel between God and Baal, the Israelites again declared, "The LORD, He is God!" Elijah told Ahab to go eat and drink, "for there is the sound of abundance of rain," and while Ahab went to eat, Elijah and his servant went to the top of the mountain where Elijah bowed himself down and began to pray.

Each time Elijah prayed for rain, he sent his servant to go look out toward the sea, and each time the servant looked and had nothing to report. Finally, after the seventh time, Elijah's servant saw a small cloud rising out of the sea. Elijah told him to send a message to Ahab for him to ready his chariot and go home before the rain stopped him. The sky soon became black with clouds, the wind blew, and heavy rain began to fall. The hand of the LORD came upon Elijah giving him strength and speed to outrun Ahab's chariots and beat him home.

Once home, Ahab told Jezebel about what happened. She was not pleased with how things had turned out on Mt. Carmel. Remember, she was largely responsible for Baal worship being enforced. She had killed prophets of the God of Israel, and now that her prophets of Baal had been destroyed she wanted revenge on Elijah. She threatened Elijah's life and he fled from her presence.

LOOK

Elijah was a man of prayer, and what we read in today's lesson gives us an important lesson in regard to how we pray. You may remember that when we studied James, we were told that the fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16). In other words, the continuous prayer of the righteous works! James used Elijah as an example of this. He prayed that it would not rain, and it didn't. He prayed that it would rain and it did!

But why didn't God just send the rain? Why did He want Elijah to pray for it? Couldn't He just send the rain without Elijah's prayer? Of course! But God allows us to be a part of the amazing work He is doing through prayer. He wants us to come to Him in prayer and acknowledge that He is the One who is able to help us. We can't do anything without Him (John 15:5). So Elijah prayed, and God answered, but not right away.

And this is another important lesson Elijah teaches us. When we pray for something, and we don't see that thing happen, God doesn't want us to get discouraged and stop praying. He wants us to do just the opposite! Jesus shared a parable about a man who had some visitors late at night and knocked on his neighbor's door to ask him for food. His neighbor had been sleeping and told him to go away before his whole

The interpretation/
exegesis of the passage.
What does this passage
mean? How does this
passage apply to my
life?

LOOK (Continued)

family woke up. But the man kept knocking and asking, so the neighbor finally got up and gave him bread just so he would go away! God's not like that neighbor. He doesn't get annoyed with us when we keep coming to Him in prayer about the same thing. That's what He wants us to do. Jesus said ask, and keep asking. You will receive! Seek, and keep seeking. You will find! Knock, and keep knocking. The door will be opened to you.

Is your family member sick? Keep praying. Is there something you are afraid of? Keep praying. Elijah prayed for rain. When his servant returned and told him there was nothing, he didn't throw in the towel and give up. He knew God would bring the rain, but he also knew he had to keep praying. Elijah prayed seven times before the cloud came.

Continuing to pray shows God that we trust Him. Sometimes He wants us to wait and to keep praying. We trust His timing, and even if He answers our prayers in a way that we don't like, we know He does so in love. If an earthly dad gives his kids good gifts, how much better will the gifts be that our perfect heavenly Father gives us? I wonder what He would do if we would just come to Him more in prayer. Elijah's prayer brought life back to the whole land and all who lived there! Rivers filled, plants began to grow, animals were watered, and the people were blessed. All through one man's prayer.

Sadly, the story doesn't end there. A time of great blessing quickly became a time of great trial for Elijah. Jezebel was furious with the outcome of the contest at Mt. Carmel and wanted Elijah destroyed. He fled for his life into the wilderness, and we are reminded that just because God's blessings come, doesn't mean that hard times won't. They do, but we will learn more about that next week.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Luke 11:9.

Pray: Thank God for the freedom to come to Him in prayer. Ask Him to help you to be a person of prayer, to pray and to keep praying.

Parent Question: Should I pray about something just once? Why?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 1 Kings 18:41-19:3 by David Guzik

C. Elijah goes to Jezreel.

1. ([1Ki 18:41-44](#)) Elijah prays for rain.

Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for *there is* the sound of abundance of rain.” 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, 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.” 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.’”

a. **Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain:** Elijah knew that once the *official* worship of Baal had been defeated, the purpose for the drought was fulfilled. Rain was on the way. Elijah and Ahab would now each do what they wanted to do – Elijah would pray and Ahab would eat.

b. **He bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees:** This was an unusual posture of prayer for Elijah. He wasn’t kneeling, he wasn’t sitting, he wasn’t standing, and he didn’t lay prostrate before the Lord. This shows that the power in prayer resides in faith in the living God.

i. “We scarcely recognize him, he seems so to have lost his identity. A few hours before, he stood erect as an oak of Bashan; now, he is bowed as a bulrush. Then as God’s ambassador he pleaded with man; now as man’s intercessor he pleads with God. It is not always so – that the men who stand straightest in the presence of sin bow lowest in the presence of God.” (Meyer)

c. **It came to pass the seventh time:** This was stubbornly *persistent* prayer. It was as if Elijah would not take “no” for an answer, because he had confidence that God’s will was to send rain. He stubbornly furthered the will of God by his persistent prayer.

i. “Go again seven times; let us not be dejected for some disappointments, but continue to wait upon God, who will answer me, and that speedily.” (Poole)

ii. “God’s promises are given, not to restrain, but to incite to prayer. They show the direction in which we may ask, and the extent to which we may expect an answer They are the mould into which we may pour our fervid spirits without fear.” (Meyer)

d. **There is a cloud, as small as a man’s hand, rising out of the sea!** Elijah prayed, asking in faith for God to send the rain. Elijah obviously *sensed* this was the will of God, yet it was his fervent prayer that brought the rain. The evidence of the rain came slowly and in a small way, but out of this small evidence God brought a mighty work.

i. In the November 9, 1904 edition of *The Life of Faith*, a London newspaper dedicated to the deeper life movement, a writer named Jessie Penn-Lewis reported on a remarkable work just beginning in Wales under the ministry of men like Evan Roberts and Seth Joshua. She reported that a *cloud no bigger than a man's hand* had arisen in Wales. It was a fitting description of the clear but small beginning of what became a mighty work.

ii. Charles Spurgeon used this text as an illustration of the small signs that precede a mighty work of God. He spoke of four "certain signs and tokens for good which prayerful faith clearly perceives when an awakening, a genuine revival is about to come." Christians should regard the following things as clouds, **as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea.**

- A growing dissatisfaction with the present state of things, and an increasing anxiety among the members of the church for the salvation of souls.
- When this anxiety leads believers to be exceedingly earnest and importunate in prayer.
- When ministers begin to take counsel one with another, and to say, "What must we do?"
- When we shall see the doctrine of the individual responsibility of each Christian fully felt and carried out into individual action.

e. **Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you:** This was a word of faith from Elijah to Ahab. Based only on the sighting of a **cloud** that was **as small as a man's hand**, he knew a torrent was on the way.

2. ([1Ki 18:45-46](#)) Elijah's amazing 14 mile cross-country run.

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. 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.

a. **There was a heavy rain:** God's word through Elijah was proved true. The long drought was over, and it was demonstrated that the prayers of Elijah both *withheld* the rain and then subsequently *brought* the rain.

b. **Then the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab:** This was an obviously supernaturally empowered 14-mile cross-country run. We don't know exactly why it was important to God for Elijah to reach Jezreel first; perhaps it was so that he would be the first to tell Queen Jezebel.

i. "To demonstrate that he was neither ashamed of, nor afraid for, what he had done, though he knew how Jezebel would resent it, but durst venture himself in the midst of his enemies, as being confident of the Divine power and protection." (Poole)

ii. "That Elijah could have made such a run is assured in the Arab runners could easily cover one hundred miles in two days." (Patterson and Austel)

A. Elijah flees to the wilderness.

1. ([1Ki 19:1-3](#)) Jezebel's threat.

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." And when he saw *that*, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there.

a. **Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done:** The report came as a great shock to this champion of Baal and Astarte worship in Israel. She thought so much of these priests that she supported them from the royal treas-

ury – and now they were dead at the hand of Elijah.

b. **So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time:** Jezebel heard about **all that Elijah had done**, encompassing the great confrontation at Mount Carmel. Yet her response was *not* to say, “The silence of Baal and the fire from Yahweh proves that I am wrong and Yahweh is God.” Instead, she responded with a vow to kill within 24 hours the man who *exposed* the lie of Baal worship and *displayed* the glory of Yahweh.

i. “He probably thought that the miracle at Carmel would have been the means of effecting the conversion of the whole court and of the country, but, finding himself mistaken, he is greatly discouraged.” (Clarke)

c. **When he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba:** We cannot say for certain if this was led of God or not. It is clear that God wanted to protect Elijah, but we cannot say if God wanted to protect him at Jezreel or protect him by getting him out of Jezreel. Nevertheless, Elijah went about 80 miles south to Beersheba.

i. “Probably Elijah had played into Jezebel’s hand. Had she really wanted Elijah dead, she surely would have seized him without warning and slain him. What she desired was that Elijah and his God be discredited before the new converts what had aided Elijah by executing the prophets of Baal.” (Patterson and Austel)

ii. “Elijah failed in the very point at which he was strongest, and that is where most men fail. In Scripture, it is the wisest man who proves himself to be the greatest fool; just as the meekest man, Moses, spoke hasty and bitter words. Abraham failed in his faith, and Job in his patience; so, he who was the most courageous of all men, fled from an angry woman.” (Spurgeon)