

James (Lesson 27)

TEXT: James 5:17-18

INTRO: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." *James 5:16b*

I. (vs. 17) Elijah exemplifies effective prayer.

NOTE: The story begins in I Kings 16:28-33; 17:1

A. Elijah was given a purpose.

NOTE: His name means "my God is Jehovah" or "Yah(u) is God".

1. To live for God in the midst of an idolatrous society.

NOTE: Israel was given over to idolatry. See I Kings 16:32-33; Deut. 16:21-22

B. Elijah understood the power of prayer.

NOTE: James has been teaching about the "prayer of faith". James 1:5-8; 5:15

1. A total trust in God to accomplish His will.

NOTE: Matt. 6:5-13

2. It was God and not the false gods who was calling the shots.

NOTE: Under Ahab the country enjoyed a time of prosperity and gross immorality.

II. (vs. 18) Once again God unleashes His power to a simple prayer.

NOTE: I Kings 18:1, 17-46

A. God ends the drought and sends the rain.

B. James reminds us of our nature and total dependence upon God.

NOTE: "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours" He had fears and discouragement and suffered depression. I Kings 19:1-4; 9-18 The Greek word *Homoioopathes* was used in Acts 14:15 where it's also translated *passions* meaning "suffering the like with another, of like feelings or affections" See Acts 14:8-15

III. (vs. 16b) "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

A. Prayer is **powerful**!

NOTE: *Energeo* translated "effectual fervent" refers to "the effect produced in the praying man, bringing him into line with the will of God, as in the case of Elijah." *Vine's*

B. God answers the prayers of righteous people.

1. Those who have been declared righteous. (saved, born again)

NOTE: Rom. 10:10 "...that righteousness of God which is judicially reckoned to all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" *The Scofield Reference Bible*

2. Those whose sins have been forgiven.

NOTE: Sin will hinder our prayers. Look again at the context of the sick in vs. 14-15.

3. Those who earnestly seek God according to His Word (will).

NOTE: Heb. 11:6 "You cannot separate the Word of God and prayer, for in His Word He gives us the promises that we claim when we pray." *Warren Wiersbe*

CONCLUSION: "Elijah knew for certain that rain would come; God had promised it; and yet he had to pray the seven times....It is 'through faith and patience we inherit the promises.'"

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