

When God waits to answer prayer

1 Kings 18:40-45 (Mt. Carmel – Part 3)

- I. Elijah prayed for fire (review – 1 Kings 18:22-40)
 - A. God answered Elijah's prayer for fire immediately (18:22-39).
 - Sometimes God answers what we pray about as soon as we ask if it's His will (18:36-38).
 - B. God's answer showed his authority – The Israelites worshipped; Baal's prophets executed (18:39-40).

- II. Elijah prayed for rain (1 Kings 18:40-45)
 - A. Elijah told King Ahab it was about to rain and then went to Mt. Carmel to pray for rain (18:41-42).
 - B. God didn't answer until Elijah's 7th prayer (18:43-44).
 - Sometimes God delays His answer until we have asked repeatedly even though it's his will (18:1)
 - C. God answer showed his compassion to Israel, but delayed answering for Elijah's benefit (18:41-45).

- III. Praying persistently like Elijah
 - A. Elijah is our model of persistent prayer (James 5:17-18).
 - B. God waits to answer prayer to do greater things for us.
 - To develop a patient trust in God's plan (Psalm 37:7)
 - To develop perseverance in prayer (Luke 18:1)
 - To grow strong faith for the future (Isaiah 40:31; 64:4)
 - To learn to trust God's goodness as we wait (Psalm 27:13-14; Matthew 7:11)
 - To realize peace comes from trusting God (Phil. 4:6-7)
 - To learn to give thanks before circumstances change (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Colossians 4:2)
 - So more are thankful (2 Corinthians 1:10-11)
 - To learn humility by our inability (John 15:5, 7-8)