

## **ELIJAH PRAYED by John Salmon**

James 19

James had been writing about the prayer of faith healing the sick, and he cites the case of Elijah praying for the cessation of rain upon the earth, and also afterward that God might send rain upon the earth. Now this was a payer for physical blessing or concerning material things. It was appropriate to refer to it when speaking of the material body, which was to be healed by the prayer of faith; because we are sometimes met with the statement that God could, or would, not interfere with the laws of nature to heal bodies from their disease. But God did it in the past, to answer to prayer, and why not today? Now we might ask the question, "Why did Elijah pray for a cessation of rain, which would necessarily bring about so much distress in the Kingdom of Israel. We turn to the book of Deuteronomy 11:16 & 17. "Take heed to yourselves lest your heart be deceived and ye turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; and the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and He shut up the heaven, that there be no rain," etc.

Now at this time the Israelites had a wicked king named Ahab, with a more wicked wife Jezebel. The whole nation was given up to the worship of Baal, with two exceptions. So Elijah could just tell God to fulfill His own promise that the people might see how they stood before God. I can imagine Elijah saying. "Lord God, the people are all gone over to idolatry, and Thou hast promised to shut up the heavens and stop the rains if they would do so. Now do as Thou hast said." We read that God answered his prayer and stopped the rain for three years and six months.

Afterwards, when the people said, "The Lord He is God." on the occasion of fire coming down to consume the sacrifice to answer to Elijah's prayer as recorded in I Kings 18:38. "When all the people saw it they fell on their faces and they said, "The Lord He Is God. The Lord He Is God." Now Elijah would he cognizant of what was contained in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple In I Kings

8:35-37. "When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against Thee. If they pray toward this place and confess Thy name and turn from their sin, then send rain." etc. So that he could come boldly to God again and ask for the fulfillment of His promise to His people.

They had complied with the conditions laid down in His Word. Accordingly God answered the prayer of Elijah, which was founded on His own promise and sent the rain upon the land. Some one might have said: "Elijah. It is five hundred years since that promise was made, but now it has become obsolete. Nobody thinks of going away so far back as that." That is the way people now talk about the promises in James regarding the prayer of faith on behalf of the sick. It belongs, they say, to the early ages of the Church, but it is now obsolete. Listen to what Moses says. Deuteronomy 7:9 "Know therefore that the Lord the God, He is God. The faithful God which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations." Now a generation is usually regarded as thirty years, and we learn that if God made a promise thirty thousand years ago then He will make it good today.

Blessed be His name forever. So we learn that Elijah was a man of passions as we are, and he obtained answers to prayer in regard to material things. So we may expect to get our prayers answered when we, like Elijah, comply with God's conditions pray for physical healing, which is contained in this chapter in which Elijah's case is brought forward as a striking illustration of God's willingness to set aside the so-called laws of nature if needs be to grant his peoples' request according to His Word and thus heal the sick.

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