

2026 05 31 / 1 Kings 18:42-46, James 5:17-18  
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## Waiting For the Rain I

### The Birthday of a Promise

I want to share with you a story that happened to me last year, on September 25th. It was the birthday of a promise that God spoke to me specifically about Fifth Avenue United Methodist Church.

God gave me a scripture during the prayer time. It was **James 5:18, which states “Then he (Elijah) prayed again, and the sky gave**

**rain and the land produced its fruit.”** (CSB) I could not understand what it meant at all. So, I held the scripture and continued to pray so that God may give me a clarification regarding that scripture. Soon, the word **revival** came to my mind.

It was the message of God that God will bring a revival for our church, so I should pray. I started to pray for the revival of our church. The message repeated at the turning point of the year. And at the first staff meeting, I received the same scripture again. The message came continuously through my prayer time. Recently, a friend of mine visited me. I wrote this in the June Newsletter.

Jenny, a pastor serving three churches in northern Wisconsin, shared a vision with me one morning. “Hae-Jeong, I had a vision of you standing in the middle of a desert. Soon, green shoots sprouted from the dry ground and began to spread around you.” The meaning of the vision struck me immediately. I had been hearing the same message repeatedly, both internally and externally. At that moment, I fully understood that God wanted to bless us so much. As a pastor, I felt compelled to prepare a revival for our church.

How should we prepare to receive the heavenly rain? Revival cannot be achieved through human effort alone, such as a sermon series or a special event. It requires the divine touch of God. Our church should be prepared to receive that heavenly rainfall. Before we delve into the conditions of revival, let’s first examine the Old Testament background story of the James 5:18 Scripture.

### Old Testament Background Story

It is mentioned in 1 Kings 18 that the Land of Israel faced a severe drought for three and a half years due to the idolatrous practices of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. I highly recommend reading the entire chapter; it’s a truly dramatic and famous story. A grand competition took place on Mount Carmel. One side consisted of 450 priests of Baal, while the other side was represented by only one prophet, Elijah. Both parties constructed altars dedicated to their respective gods and offered one bull each to the altar. The deity who caused fire to descend from Heaven would be the true God.

The Baal’s priests danced around their altar, even inflicting wounds on themselves with swords, and blood flowed from their bodies. After several hours, their turn ended. When Elijah prayed to Yahweh God, fire descended immediately, burning the sacrifice and drying all the waters surrounding the altar. Elijah won the competition.

Immediately after that great victory, he started to pray for rain. It was the prayer asking for rain after three and half years drought. Suddenly he heard the sound of big rain through his spiritual ears. When seven rounds of prayer finished, a cloud of the size of a man's hand rose. Elijah knew that great rain would be falling down.

The Bible says that mighty rain poured on the thirsty ground. Isaiah 44:3 was written for this exact moment. Listen to these words:

“For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your descendants and my blessing on your offspring.” (CSB). And notice the language of the verse. Refreshing water. Streams. Poured out. This is a flooding, overwhelming, saturating move of the Spirit of God. And it is promised. This is “I will.” I will pour. I will send streams. I will pour out my Spirit. I saw God’s promise in various ways. I was asking myself, will God’s move be big? If God does, God can. If God wants, God can. And God promised! Still, I felt scared as a pastor as well as incredibly blessed. If God says so, how should I prepare with our church family?

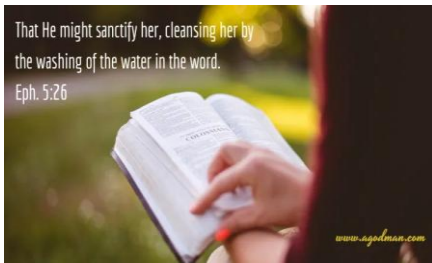


### Preparation for the Rain

The question now is — are we positioned to receive it? Are we holding our cups upright? Or are we digging a trench to make a channel? Are we making room in our hearts? How do we prepare? We can do it in personal ways and also in corporate ways. If each of us doesn’t become a channel of God, we cannot be a channel as a corporate way. First, it’s important that you become a revival.

We are in the spiritual era that we are invited to abide in the Holy Spirit permanently, as a way of life. Jesus is knocking on the door of our hearts, and we need to host Jesus permanently. Think about what it means to host someone. When you prepare to welcome a guest into your home, you clean the house. You make room. You adjust things. You make sure there is nothing in the space that would make your guest uncomfortable or unwelcome. Hosting is an act of intentional preparation.

It means that we are not just seeking experiences of God. We are becoming the kind of people who can sustain the weight of His presence. It means everyday moments, our souls, and spirits should be the place where we are aligned with the Lord. You become a person with a reflective life to check through the moments of the day. Daily, every morning and night. It is never a duty; it becomes life-giving joy.



Think about this. When you live with God and with word, what does the Lord give to you? God gives you everything of life; joy and love! There is real peace that nobody can take away. In the relationship with God, you find that there is victory. You can discover who you are really, your true self. You are freed from worldly worry and fear. It is because where there is the Holy Spirit, there is freedom. (2 Corinthians 3:17) You will see each day through His eyes; your perception and thoughts become like God’s. Wow!!! Living in the presence of God! You are wrapped and surrounded by the protection of the Lord.

When you host His presence. You encounter Him, you enjoy Him. You love God, and you are loved. The prayer becomes more enjoyment rather than requesting, asking a list of things. Of course it is important. God wants to hear from you. However, you will find greater joy in hanging out with Him. It is the most beautiful part of being with God. It is the preparation of a cleansed channel by hosting God in you.

For such life, you must actively guard your thought life to remain in unbroken fellowship with the Lord. And you live out your internal reality.

Through this process, you are sanctified and cleansed in every word, thought, and action. You become more sensitive to the presence and to the things happening in your soul. You don't want to miss the joyful time with God; you don't want to miss the time that you check with God and confess daily something done wrong that day in the light of the Holy Spirit. It means you become a cleansed channel. This is personal preparation by cleansing your soul.

However, for the pouring rain from Heaven upon our church, we cannot schedule it or produce it on our own. God is the one who decides the timing, when we are ready as an appropriate channel of the Holy Spirit. I do not know how God would visit us. Will that be a supernatural event like Pentecost? I am curious. For me, the word *revival* sounds so historic such as England Wales by Evan Roberts or the revival of Azusa Street in Los Angeles. Or rather, will that be everyone's beauty of holiness that attracts the community people supernaturally? I do not know. God knows the way, and the scale.

For now, we are in the stage where we need to humbly kneel and cleanse our souls for the rain from Heaven. So that personal revival may occur in daily lives. So that our spirit may enjoy the presence in daily moments and know the heavenly peace and rest. It should be first personal revival. Then as a church, we currently set the time together to pray as a corporate body. I am encouraging you to do 111 prayer, which means that you set an alarm at 1 p.m. daily, and the alarm signals, then enter one minute or longer prayer by taking deep breaths. If we do it together at the same time, it is powerful. However, it is not enough. We need more prayer like the disciples in Mark's upper room. Sincere, faithful, fervent prayer together!

Begin with daily Scripture alignment by coming to the Word of God each day and say **“God, align me with what You are saying. Correct me where I have drifted. Soften me where I have hardened. Show me where my thinking has become dry and brittle and irrigate me with Your truth.”**

When a church is filled with people who are doing this daily, when people who are individually hosting the presence daily through Scripture, through prayer, through surrender, then we are not starting from zero. More ready than before. We are bringing something to meet the standard of God's revival. This is the preparation that precedes revival. Not perfection. Not performance. But daily, faithful, humble alignment with the Word and presence of God.