

**The Prophet Elijah
1 Kings 17:17-24
God's Goodness and Power**

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

17 After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill. And his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. 18 And she said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my son!" 19 And he said to her, "Give me your son." And he took him from her arms and carried him up into the upper chamber where he lodged, and laid him on his own bed. 20 And he cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by killing her son?" 21 Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again." 22 And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. 23 And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and delivered him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives." 24 And the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth." (1 Kings 17:17-24)

Introduction

- Most of us learned the **Monroe Doctrine** in **High School History class?**
- This doctrine was promoted by **the fifth president of the United States, James Monroe.**
- It's US **policy** of **opposing European interference** in the **Western Hemisphere.**
- **So that's our history lesson for today!**

- **But** there's a more recent "**Monroe Doctrine**" that relates to **our Elijah series.**
- **It has been promoted by many but was clearly stated** by the movie star **Marilyn Monroe**.
- When Monroe was asked **if she believed in God,**
- she answered, "***I just believe in everything—a little bit.***" This is the new **Monroe Doctrine.**

- It's the **principle** that as long as we believe in **a little bit of everything,**
- **Everything will be all right**; everyone will like us; and **no one will be offended.**
- The more religions, philosophies and cultural fads we embrace (or tolerate) **the merrier.**
- A little of this and a little of that, **but not too much of any one thing.**
- You don't want to be a fanatic about anything, **just be accepting of everything.**

- **This Monroe Doctrine** has become the basic **religious principle** of **American culture.**
- People don't want to be intolerant, **so they tolerate (even believe) a little bit of everything.**

- A majority of Americans still believe in God, and Jesus.
- And about half believe that the Bible is accurate.
- But some of these same people also believe in the power of positive thinking,
- the basic goodness of humanity, luck, aliens, **and checking their horoscopes every day,** just to name a few.

- And the only way to believe all these things at the same time is to adhere to **the Monroe Doctrine: believe everything a little bit.**
- Elijah faced a **similar worldview in his times.**
- In Israel, most people no longer believed that the **LORD was the one and only living God.**
- Instead, led by a number of evil Kings, they believed **in a little bit of everything.**
- They were mixing **a little Baal worship** with **a little Asherah worship,**
- And even topping it off with a little worship of **the God of Israel.**
- And so, the major thrust of **Elijah's ministry** was to **refute the Monroe Doctrine.**
- His mission was to **demonstrate** that **there is only one God,**
- **the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Lord God of the Bible.**
- And we've seen this **already in 1 Kings 17.**
- **Elijah** has taught us almost everything we need to know about **the one true God.**
- **This chapter is like God 101:** a short course in the **goodness and power of the Living God.**
- We've seen **God's goodness,** in that he hates sin, judges sinners justly,
- keeps his promises, has mercy on the needy, loves the widow and the fatherless,
- and adopts foreigners into his own family. **In short, as the Psalmist tells us...**

⁵ the LORD is good... (Psalms 100:5)

- **Also, we've seen God's Mighty Power.**
- He has power over nature: He is the one who sends the rain in its season,
- or causes drought to fall upon the land.
- **He has the power to provide.**
- During the time of drought God provided everything **Elijah needed.**
- He gave him a safe place to live in **Cherith**, where he was fed by ravens and drank from a brook.
- And when the brook dried up. He provided for Elijah through **the widow of Zarephath.**
- **Her jar of flour and the jug of oil did not run dry.**
- **And finally,** what we'll see today is that **God has the power to raise the dead.**
- In these **final eight verses** of **1 Kings 17**, we come to the **pinnacle** of Elijah's argument against the **Monroe Doctrine.**
- This is the **strongest proof,** yet for what Elijah declared in the **first verse of the chapter...**

The LORD the God of Israel lives

- **There is but one God,** the living God of Israel.
- And in **these final verses of chapter 17**, we'll see **his goodness and power at work.**
- Not only in the life of the widow's son but also, in the lives of **the widow and Elijah.**

- And as we examine these verses.
- I want us to see that God can and will do **the same things in our lives**.
- Yes, this is a story that takes place almost 3,000 years ago,
- **but because God lives today**, Because God continues to be good and powerful.
- What he did then is relevant for our lives now.
- So, let's turn to our passage and see God at Work, first in the life of the **widow's son** where...

1. God Takes the Son from Death to Life

- Verse 17....

17 After this

- Sometime after God had revealed his goodness and power by providing the widow with unending supply of flour and oil which **saved her life and the life of her son**.

the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill. And his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. (1 Kings 17:17)

- It's clear from these words that this boy was actually dead.
- To paraphrase **The Princess Bride**...
- He wasn't **mostly dead (which is slightly alive)**, He was **all dead**.
- It's not until after Elijah prays that he can say to **his mother**...

23 ...“See, your son lives.” (1 Kings 17:23)

- Now as **New Testament** believers, **God's power over death is not new to us**.
- The gospels tell us that Jesus raised Jairus' daughter, the son of the widow of Nain,
- **and of course He raised Lazurus** from the dead.
- And as we celebrate every Easter/Resurrection Sunday.
- We **know** that **Jesus's defeated of both sin and death on the cross**,
- **is** proven once for all **by His resurrection from the dead**.
- We know that Jesus was dead and buried but...

4 ...that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 15:4)

- **We know all this from the New Testament**,
- but here in **1 Kings 17**, in the **OT**, we have the first record **resurrection from the dead**.
- As the creator of life, God has **always** had power over life and death.
- **He holds the power over life and death. There is none like Him!**
- Now this **first resurrection** foreshadows all the **resurrections** that would follow.
- But especially the **resurrection power of God**, that was **fully revealed in Jesus Christ**.
- **When God took His Son from Death to Life**.
- The widow's son and all others who were similarly raised from the dead, **died again**.

- But as Paul wrote to **the Romans...**

⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. (Romans 6:9)

- Death no longer has dominion (power) over Christ.
- And that is **certainly good news** because it means that...
- death no longer **has dominion over those who trust in Him.**
- God through **the prophet Elijah** took this boy from death to life, **but the boy died again.**

- **However**, for those who put their faith in Christ.
- God will take us (like he did Jesus) from death to life, **to die no more.**
- Believers in Christ will die a physical death, **as the widow's son did.**

- But the believer that dies will be raised again to everlasting life.
- As Paul wrote to the church in Philippi...

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)

- One day we will be transformed, our bodies will become Christ-like.
- **But this is only half of our resurrection story.**
- Because passing from **death to life** is not something **we must wait for until we physically die.**
- Like all humanity, we were born in sin and therefore **subject to death because of sin.**
- But all who have faith in Jesus Christ have already crossed over from **death to spiritual life.**
- As Paul **wrote to the Ephesian church...**

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world... ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ... (Ephesians 2:1-5)

- Do you see what this means?
- It means that if you trust in Christ, not only will you be physically resurrected from the dead.
- But you have **already been made alive together with Christ.**
- This is the good news! Christians are today, no longer dead in our sin **but alive in Christ.**
- Therefore, **we can live for Christ.**
- **God is good and powerful.**
- **And therefore, he can and has already taken those who trust in him from death to life.**
- However, we must also understand that anyone who has not yet trusted in Jesus Christ is still dead in transgressions and sins.
- They are spiritually dead and will upon their physical death enter into eternal death.

- Yet the good God of heaven and earth,
- **who alone has power over sin and death, offers eternal life,**
- **not to those who trust in a little bit of everything, but to all who will trust in Him alone.**
- You must give your whole self completely over to the God who raised Jesus from the dead.
- **Only then will we pass from death to life. As Jesus said...**

²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)

- So first, we've seen God's goodness and power as He takes the widow's Son (his Son and all who trust in him) from Death to Life.
- **Then second,** we see his goodness and power as...

2. God Takes the Widow from Disbelief to Faith

- God's **resurrection power** also did something in the life of the widow.
- When her son died, her spiritual condition was one of "**disbelief**" rather than "**unbelief.**"
- **What's the difference? I'm glad you asked.**
- **Unbelief** is what characterizes an **unbeliever**,
- someone who has not yet **put his or her faith in God.**
- The widow was **not an unbeliever** in this sense.
- If you remember from **last week**, even though she was down to her last meal,
- God in his grace and goodness, **sent his prophet to save her and her son from starvation.**
- And the widow had enough faith/belief in God to trust his **promise of provision,**
- She demonstrated her faith by giving Elijah her last meal.
- So, I think it is fair to say, that like Abraham, this widow...

⁶ ...believed the LORD, and he counted it to [her] as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)

- However, as anyone who's believed the LORD knows.
- There are times of testing when **we can struggle with doubts and disbelief.**
- And that is certainly the case for this widow.
- The troubles of life had **made a partial disbeliever** out of her.
- She still believed in God's existence and even in His power.
- The problem was **she was struggling to believe in God's goodness.**
- She couldn't **understand why God would allow her son to die.**
- And she was **filled not only with grief, but also with resentment.**
- When her son died, **she found her faith being tested.**
- She had faith enough for the good times, **but not the bad times.**

- And I hope we're able to sympathize with her.
- This poor woman lost everything when she lost her son.
- She lost her closest companion, her only family member, and almost all security for her old age.
- In the words of **A. W. Pink**,

In him all her affections were centered, and with his death all her hopes were destroyed. (A. W. Pink)

- And it all happened so suddenly!
- Just when life seemed to be working out,
- just when she and her son had been **delivered from starvation, he was taken from her.**
- Things had gone from bad, to good, to tragic. **It all seemed so unfair!**
- And she was not equipped or mature enough to say with Job,
- who had experienced similar and even greater loss.

²¹ ... "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." (Job 1:21)

- Instead in her great sorrow, in her disbelief,
- In her inability to trust in the goodness of God, **she lashes out against his prophet Elijah...**

¹⁸ And she said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God?... (1 Kings 17:18)

- Although her complaint is really with God, Elijah is his representative on the scene,
- So, she directs her anger at him, **as people often do in times of difficulty.**
- And what the widow says next reveals that she was consciousness of her sin,
- and of God's judgment of sin. **The woman says to Elijah...**

¹⁸ ...You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my son!" (1 Kings 17:18)

- Basically, what she is saying is that Elijah, in some way, has brought her sin before God.
- which in turn has brought her under God's judgment.
- Which has led to the death of her son.
- This reveals the woman's guilty conscience.
- Her real problem is not that God has suddenly noticed her sin,
- but **she herself has finally noticed it.**
- Suffering has convicted her of sin.
- In all likelihood, **Elijah had taught the widow and her son from the Scriptures,**
- perhaps leading them in devotions **after their daily meal.**
- He may well have explained how he had prayed **for the drought that was punishing God's people for their sins.**

- But in any case, the widow had learned **God's standards for holy living**,
- and she recognized that **she was falling short**.
- But she wrongly believed that **her sin** was the cause of her **son's death**.
- And this is a **common mistake**, we see it throughout the book of Job,
- As his friends assumed that his suffering was caused by his sin.
- And **Jesus's disciples** thought the same thing.
- After seeing a blind man, **they asked Jesus...**

² ...“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (John 9:2)

- And Jesus replied...

³ Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:3)

- And the same **thing proved to be true for the widow's son**,
- it was not the **boy's or his mother's sin** that caused his death.
- But his death **will cause the works of God to be displayed**.
- It will cause **God's goodness and power (his glory) to shine forth**.
- But the widow doesn't know that yet.
- All she knows is that there is a connection **between sin and death**.
- And she's a sinner, **so she saw the death of her son as God's punishment for her sins**.
- And unfortunately, her guilty conscience does not cause her to repent and asked God to forgive her sins.
- But instead, she **shifted the blame from herself to Elijah**.

“What have you against me?” “Why have you brought my sin to God's attention?” Why have you caused the death of my son?

- Bottom line, in her sorrow and pain, this widow, does not react very well to the death of her son.
- Blaming Elijah, blaming her sin, **all of which was both foolish and understandable**.
- **And clearly God understood**.
- In his goodness, his grace, his compassion, his mercy and loving-kindness,
- He **rescues this widow from her foolishness and he transforms her heart**.
- He displays **his great works to her**, revealing both **his goodness and power**.
- **He takes her from disbelief to faith**.
- And he does this through His prophet and a very personal encounter with **resurrection**.
- When Elijah placed her son back in her arms alive, the woman said:

²⁴ ...“Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth.” (1 Kings 17:24)

- **Now the widow knows! Now she believes! Now she trusts in the LORD!**
- It was not until she held her living, breathing son in her arms that she came to a firm conviction of the truth of God.
- The author of Hebrews is certainly referring this widow, when in chapter 11, the hall of faith,
- he writes that through faith...

³⁵ Women received back their dead by resurrection. (Hebrews 11:35)

- **Through the experience of the resurrection of her Son,**
- God took this widow **from disbelief to faith.**
- And there is a lesson here for us as well.
- The widow of Zarephath shows how faith in the living God is grounded in the truth of his goodness and power, **specifically the truth of His resurrection power.**
- It is on the basis of the raising of her son that the widow of Zarephath was able to give her testimony:

Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth

- And something similar but even greater happened during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.
- On one occasion Jesus went to **the town of Nain**, and

¹² As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. (Luke 7:12-15)

- The connections between the widow of Zarephath and the widow of Nain **are unmistakable.**
- They are both widows, they have both lost their only sons, and they are both grief-stricken.
- Then they both witnessed **the same miracle**, as their sons were returned to them by the life-giving power of God.
- And these two miracles both had the same result.
- When people saw what God had done, they believed in him.
- The Widow of Zarephath believed.
- And when the people of Nain saw the power of God over death,
- they put their faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" (Luke 7:16)

- The life-giving power of God confirms the Word of God and brings people to faith in Jesus Christ.
- Thomas was also taken from Disbelief (Doubt) to faith when he saw the risen Christ.

- He had said that he wouldn't put his faith in Christ unless he could see him with his own eyes and touch him with his own hands.
- So, when Jesus appeared to Thomas, he showed him his resurrection body:

²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:27-28)

- A personal encounter with the resurrection power of God made a believer out of Thomas.
- He was brought from **disbelief to faith in the risen Christ**.
- And the same should be true of all Christians.
- Believing in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not just a once-a-year event for Easter Sunday.
- **It is foundational to the our faith.**
- As Paul wrote to the **church in Rome...**

⁹ ...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

- According to Paul, anyone who does not truly believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not yet saved, they are not a Christian.
- But if we do believe in the resurrection,
- then we do not need to fear that God will judge us for our sins,
- or think that our painful circumstances in life prove that God is angry with us, **as the widow of Zarephath believed.**
- On the contrary, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead proves that God is and always will be for us, not against us.
- And it demonstrates, more than any other event in human history,
- **that God is good and powerful.**
- So, we've seen God's goodness and power in the lives of the son and the widow.
- Taking one from death to life and the other from disbelief to faith.
- And we've also seen how the resurrection Christ is foundational to our faith.
- Taking us from death to life and disbelief to faith.
- And now we turn to Elijah, where we see how...

3. God Takes Elijah from Questioning to Praying

- Elijah clearly had great faith in God.
- He trusted and obeyed the Lord when was sent to confront King Ahab.
- And when God promised to provide for him at the Cherith brook and then through the widow.
- Elijah put his faith in the promises of God.

- But even those who have **great faith sometimes have questions.**
- And this was the case for Elijah; **things had been going well for him.**
- During a great famine, **He had a place to stay and food to eat.**
- But then circumstances changed.
- His landlady came to him with a **dead body and a charge being an accessory to murder.**

18 And she said to Elijah, “What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my son!” (1 Kings 17:18)

- Elijah was certainly a “man of God”, a prophet, a minister, a pastor if you will!
- And at this point he had a pretty small congregation, **only two members.**
- But one of them was dead and the other was attacking his ministry,
- which is sometimes the way **pastoral ministry goes.**
- This accusation from the widow would have caused most pastors,
- most people to become defensive.
- But Elijah didn’t defend himself or his ministry,
- **He showed great restraint in the face of opposition.**
- He didn’t explain why the woman’s accusations were unjust.
- Look lady, I’m not God, take it up with HIM!
- He didn’t blame her for her sins.
- You know you’re probably right; **it’s because of your sin that your son is dead.**
- Also, he didn’t give a lecture about why bad things happen to good people.
- He didn’t even say, **“I know exactly how you feel.”**
- Instead, he simply said...

19 ...“Give me your son.” And he took him from her arms and carried him up into the upper chamber where he lodged, and laid him on his own bed. 20 And he cried to the LORD... (1 Kings 17:19-20)

- Here we see how Elijah dealt with **his problems; He took them to the Lord.**
- The son is dead and the widow is blaming him, **and Elijah cries out to God.**
- And this should be an example for us all.
- When we have a problem, when we’re facing difficulty or opposition.
- We like Elijah shouldn’t become defensive, instead we should cry out to the LORD.
- Elijah simply took the dead boy and in the privacy of his chamber,
- He brought all his problems, questions, and doubts before the Lord in prayer...

20 ...“O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by killing her son?” (1 Kings 17:20)

- These words come in the form of a question,
- which shows that Elijah didn't understand the Lord's purposes any more than the widow did.
- This is often the case with God's people (even pastors): **we don't have all the answers.**
- We don't always know what God is doing, **and sometimes we don't like what God is doing.**
- And when that's the case, **we like Elijah can cry out to the LORD in prayer.**
- **We can be honest with God!**
- We can **bring him our questions, concerns, doubts, and anxieties.**
- **But there are limits.**
- We must always remember **that God is God and we are not.**
- That his plans, his ways are higher than ours.
- We can be honest with him; we can express our concerns and doubts.
- **We can pray, Lord what are you doing here!**
- **We can admit, I don't understand!**
- **It seems to me that nothing good can come from this.**
- But ultimately, **we must trust in the LORD;** we must trust in his goodness and power.
- We must pray in faith, saying "even though I have questions, even though I don't like this,
- I trust in you more than I trust in me."
- I trust that you are working in ways I cannot see, you are doing things above my pay grade.
- And that's what we see with Elijah,
- Once he had expressed his question and concern.
- Once he has poured out his heart to God, **he then prays in faith.**

²¹ Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again." (1 Kings 17:21)

- In his exposition of this passage,
- **A. W. Pink** drew seven spiritual lessons from Elijah's prayer:
- **Let me briefly summarize.**

1) Elijah Prayed in Solitude

- He got alone with God.
- He went to his own private chamber to pray.

2) He prayed Fervently

- he **"cried to the Lord"**.

3) He prayed Relationally

- He relied on his personal relationship with the Living God, **Saying: "O Lord, my God."**

4) He prayed Humbly

- Elijah acknowledged his lack of understanding and that God was Sovereign over life and death: praying **“have you brought calamity even upon the widow.**

5) He prayed Compassionately

- The widow has just blamed him for her son’s death,
- but Elijah prays ***for the widow with whom I sojourn.***
- He understands that her son’s death is a **calamity** and his concern is for the her.

6) He prayed Earnestly

- We see this in the fact that he **stretches himself upon the child**” no less than three times.
- **And finally,**

7) He prayed in Faith

- Elijah had faith in God’s goodness and power and so he could pray
- **“Let this child’s life come into him again.”**
- **These are all valuable lessons.**
- **Especially the last, Elijah prayed in faith.**
- Bear in mind that the prophet **was praying for something he had never experienced before.**
- Remember, this is the first resurrection recorded in all of Scripture.
- And so, in all likelihood it’s the first return from death in the history of the human race.
- Elijah had no miraculous example to base his prayer.
- Yet because he knew the power and goodness of God,
- The great prophet prayed with **great faith.**
- Even Elijah’s posture for prayer demonstrated his faith.
- According to the Levitical laws, it was unlawful and impure for a holy man to touch a corpse.
- Yet as Elijah prayed he...

stretched himself upon the child three times

- It was not the prophet’s touch itself that raised the boy; **only God has the power to give life.**
- But Elijah’s touch was an act of faith,
- faith that God could make **the unclean clean and the dead to live again:**
- And **his prayer was answered...**

²² And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. ²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and delivered him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives.” (1 Kings 17:22-23)

- Even though Elijah had questions, he prayed in faith.
- He didn't follow the Monroe Doctrine.
- He didn't believe a little bit of everything.
- His belief, his faith **was completely in God.**
- He trusted **in the goodness and power of God**
- and **God answered His prayer.**
- And the same thing can be true for us.
- Anyone who puts their faith in God, **in his goodness and power.**
- Can pray with the faith of Elijah.
- This is James's point when he writes...

¹⁵ ...the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. (James 5:15-17)

- Remember that Elijah prayed mighty prayers and that he was a man just like us.
- Therefore, we can pray mighty prayers.
- And James is specifically addressing praying for those who are sick.
- So, we can and should pray for those who are sick.
- But what about praying that it will not rain?
- Or what about praying that **a dead person will come back to life.**
- Can we, should we, pray such prayers? **Maybe...**
- But before we do, I want us to notice that James includes two qualifications for prayer.
- **First**, he is speaking of the prayers of a righteous (or holy) person.
- That doesn't mean perfect, but it does mean that your life is set apart for the LORD.
- That you are living for him and his purposes.
- And therefore, your prayers will reflect not your will but his!
- And second, James is speaking of the **"prayer of faith."**
- **So, the question is do you have the faith to believe that God will answer your prayer.**
- And I don't mean, can you (in yourself) muster up enough faith **to pray really big prayers.**
- **What I mean, what I believe Scripture means, is has God given you the faith to pray such prayers.**
- Here is the bottom-line, **when God wants something to happen** (like stopping the rain or raising the son, or healing the sick) he often calls his righteous people (his person like Elijah) to pray.
- He gives his righteous servants the faith to pray the big prayers, according to his will.
- As John wrote...

14 And this is the confidence (faith) that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. (1 John 5:14-15)

- Clearly God gave Elijah the **faith to pray that the rain would not fall and for the resurrection of the widow's son.**
- And so, the question for us is not can we pray these same things,
- But what has or is God giving you the faith to pray?
- **If you're living for him and he gives you the faith to pray that the rain stops or the dead rise, then pray those prayers.**
- But my guess is he'll give you and me **the faith to pray other, maybe even bigger, prayers.**
- Prayers that come from his word!
- Prayers that are clearly his will and therefore we can **pray them fervently, relationally, humbly, compassionately, earnestly and in faith.**
- I would challenge you to pray, **big prayers based on the word of God.**
- Knowing that God is good and powerful, you can pray **big prayers** in faith.
- For example... You can...
- **Pray that you and others will live for the Lord.**
- You can Pray **for spiritual blessing (the fruit of the Spirit) in your life and lives of your fellow believers.**
- You can Pray that you (and others) would be able to overcome the sin which so easily besets us.
- You can Pray that God would give you wisdom and guidance in every area of your life.
- You can Pray that God would give you **Holy Spirit Power to proclaim the gospel.**
- And I could go on...
- There are 100s of big prayers we can pray in faith knowing they are the will of the one and only God.
- That's what righteous Elijah did...
- Knowing the Goodness and Power of the one true God!
- Knowing that God could take the dead and give them life.
- Knowing that God could take the disbelieving and give them faith.
- And knowing this was the will of God!
- In faith, Elijah took his problems, his questions and prayers to the LORD.
- And we should do the same!
- Prayer!