

Prevailing in Intercession - Part 1

by Wesley Duewel

Wesley Duewel emphasizes the vital role of intercessory prayer in the believer's life and its power to influence the world for God's kingdom.

Duration: 43:59

Scripture: Luke 11:1

Topics: "Intercessory Prayer", "Faith And Persistence"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the power of prayer through real-life examples like the woman praying at 4 am and the layman dedicating his days to prayer. It delves into the importance of prevailing prayer, citing instances like Blind Bartimaeus and Elijah on Mount Carmel, showcasing how persistence and faith in prayer can lead to miraculous answers. The sermon also highlights the significance of intercessory prayer in impacting the world and fulfilling God's plan on earth.

Transcript

I have always hungered for the prayer and treasured the knowledge of the prayer life of some of God's children here in New Zealand. I well remember a night at Palmerston North and at the close of the service I had put my slides away and a woman came to me and I discovered, she said, at four o'clock every morning I am on my knees praying for you. I have told that story in many parts of the world, I am just telescoping it to make it sure.

I remember Sunday morning before I spoke in a Baptist church in Upper Hutt, I was taken to the home of a layman who had just retired one year before. We had a beautiful lay Christian brother in advanced years in the state of Florida who spent his days just praying for missions around the world. His name was Arthur Wood.

He was taken, when I was taken to this house of Mr. Wright in near Upper Hutt to attend the Upper Hutt church, he just greeted me with such joy. He said, oh, I get your Revival magazine, 13 copies every month, which I circulate among the deacons and the leaders of our church. I was editor for some years of a magazine monthly called Revival, and we published that in 12 different languages around the world, and its English edition amazed me.

It came to New Zealand and Australia and South Africa and a surprising number of places where God used it in a very special way. He said to me, do you think God would let me take the place of Arthur

Wood? I said, brother, I am sure he would be delighted for you to live that kind of a life of prayer. He said, would you like to see my prayer room? I said, indeed I would.

He took me to an adjoining room. He said, this is my prayer room. He said, you see, I retired last year, and I get up each morning, I wash and shave and have breakfast, and then I come in this room and I spend my day here praying.

He said, would you like to see my prayer book? I said, yes. There was a big black loose-leaf notebook. He opened it up.

There was a map of India. There was my picture. There were my colleagues.

There were some of my students. He had cut pictures and things out of our OMS magazines, and the whole loose-leaf notebook was our fields around the world. That man was investing his last years in prayer.

After some years, when I heard that Brother Wright had gone to heaven, I said, what a reward he will have throughout eternity. So I've always treasured the memory of those two people, especially from New Zealand. I had a very similar situation about two weeks later in Australia.

Again, a couple that were on their knees every morning at four o'clock praying for me. I'm not worthy of that kind of prayer, but God knows I need it. And so I pray that God will use these days to impact your life with the message he wants you to receive.

I will just mention my books. I received no profit from the royalties. Everything I put into a fund to assist with Third World editions.

My books that have been written in the last eight or nine years are now in 31 nations or languages around the world where they're published. And by the end of this year, God willing, there will be some 900,000 in print. I never realized that God would open that ministry before me.

And every week I get letters from various parts of the world, people testifying what God has done in their life through the books or asking questions about prayer or asking for prayer. And so this has been the most fulfilling period of my life, 25 years for India, many years in administration in our society. And then now this time of holding prayer conferences and prayer seminars and writing the books.

And what I say here will be taken especially from my book, *Mighty Prevailing Prayer*. And you will best get the most out of my books if you take them and read them and reread them. When I was in Nigeria last November, a Nigerian evangelist came to me.

He said, I've read your book, *A Blaze for God*, through 20 times. He just goes back. When I was in Costa Rica at the Missionary Language Institute for the Spanish area of the world, there was a lady there was reading *Touch the World Through Prayer* through for the 14th time, she said.

Dr. Bill Bright said to me, Wesley, I go back to your book again and again and again. And I'm not worthy to be used like that, but God seems to be using my books in a special way. So I urge you when you are here to take copies.

My latest book, we expect it to be here by now, it must have been dispatched urgently. I'm sure it's on the way. Maybe it'll arrive tomorrow or maybe it'll arrive Monday, but you can place your order for it.

And it's entitled Revival Fire, the story of revival around the world. Each of my books is related to the theme of prayer, and I hope you will get a whole set. I hope your church has a set.

You may have friends, loved ones, children, missionaries that you want to send some of these books to and make a special blessing to them. So we begin tonight on six sessions particularly, and then Sunday morning I will be speaking a very, very important message, perhaps the most important single message that I could give on reigning with Christ through prayer. And I pray that God will seal this whole weekend with that message.

Let us read just a few verses from Luke chapter 11, beginning with the first verse. One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.

He said to them, when you pray, say, Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us and lead us not into temptation.

Then he said to them, suppose one of you has a friend and he goes to him at midnight and says, friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me and I have nothing to set before him. Then the one inside answers, don't bother me. The door is already locked and my children are with me in bed.

I can't get up and give you anything. I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness, the King James Version says, importunity, he will get up and give him as much as he needs. So I say to you, says Jesus, ask and it will be given to you.

Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives. He who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

I would like for the theme of these six sessions or seven sessions counting Sunday morning to be, Lord, teach us to pray. That was the question that the disciples asked Jesus. I will not begin each session like this, but perhaps several.

Would you join me in repeating that prayer that the disciples gave to Jesus? Would you join me in unison, repeating, Lord, teach us to pray now? This is a teaching session. We want the Lord to really teach us. Let's repeat it and emphasize the word teach, because you and I know so little about prayer.

No one ever graduates in the school of prayer. I'm just beginning to learn things. One of the poems I wrote years ago, and I read it to myself still.

Sometimes I might even read it sometime during tomorrow. The title, I begin like this. I'm but an infant, Lord, in thee.

I need to learn my ABC. And that's where we are in spiritual things and in the life of prayer. So we need to be taught.

Let's repeat, emphasizing the word teach. Lord, teach us to pray. Teach who? Billy Graham? Of course.

But teach who? Us. Let's emphasize the us. Lord, teach us to pray.

And not just to pray. There's quite a few people that just pray. They pray sometimes.

But we're talking about prevailing in prayer. Really praying. Let's repeat it the last time, emphasizing the word pray.

Lord, teach us to pray. God grant that he may do just that. There are many forms of prayer that are blessed and wonderful.

I will be emphasizing this week primarily intercessory prayer. Why does God want us to pray? Some people thought, well, maybe God was lonesome. And so he wanted to hear the prayers of his children.

Because he was lonely. Well, I'm sure the Lord delights to hear the prayers of every one of his children. But that isn't the primary reason.

No fellowship with his children could ever compare with the fellowship within the Blessed Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. No. There was a specific reason why God created you and me to pray.

Why he redeemed us to pray. And he redeemed us to pray in many ways. We have a great emphasis these days on praise and worship.

And that's beautiful. Do you know what I believe? There is a more important form of prayer for this age. And that is the prayer of intercession.

Of all God's created beings, only we join Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in intercession. I will emphasize that Sunday morning. All creation praises him.

We'll have all eternity to praise him. There is no indication in scripture that we will have any other life than this one to intercede. Martin Luther said it took him 20 years after his conversion, before he got over his Roman Catholic teaching, that the prayers of the saints influenced us here on earth.

And I've heard good people say, oh, I don't know, my mother's praying for me. Well, maybe they're convinced of that. That's a beautiful thought.

But the Bible does not say that the saints in heaven intercede. This is the life for intercession. This is the role assigned to you and me.

Many people will do all sorts of praying except the prayer of intercession. So I want to emphasize this week the prayer of intercession. That is the work of prayer.

That is the ministry of prayer. Lord, teach us to pray and to particularly intercede. Neither is prevailing prayer just a way to grow in grace.

Of course God planned that it would be a great blessing to us spiritually. And you do grow in grace. The more you pray, the more you live in God's word, the more you grow in grace.

Thank God that is a blessed benefit. But that was not God's primary reason for creating us to share with Christ in prayer. Prayer in its intercessory form is God's ordained way to extend His kingdom.

It's God's ordained way to defeat Satan. It's God's ordained way to fulfill His plan on earth. It's God's ordained way to cover this earth with blessing.

Who can bless this earth? Only God and His people. Only God and you. How much blessing comes, how many people blessed, is in your hands.

When I was in Haiti holding a prayer conference for people of different denominations about three years ago, I said to the Christians, I said, The future of Haiti is not in the hands of President Aristide. That was before he was banished from the country. Now he's back in again.

I said, The future of Haiti is not in the hands of President Aristide. The future of Haiti is not in the hands of the military. I said, The future of Haiti is in your hands as the Church of Jesus Christ.

Only you can reign with Christ in prayer. Only you are on the throne to pray, to intercede. When I was in Korea last fall, last autumn, I said to the pastor's conference, I spoke to a pastor's conference with 2,200 pastors in attendance.

I said to them, The future of Korea is not in the hands of North Korea. The future of Korea is not in the hands of your army. The future of Korea is in your hands as the leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ and in the hands of your people.

We have such awesome power given to us through prayer. Intercession is God's ordained way for you and I to influence the world in which we live. May the Lord teach us to pray.

So, God the Father is the God who hears and answers prayer, and He loves to hear our prayer, and particularly our prayer of intercession. And nothing is so Christ-like as intercession. It's angel-like to praise God.

The heavenly hosts worship and adore Him. Christ intercedes. Only Christ bears the burden of the world, and you, if you are Christ's prayer partner.

No greater work will you ever do than your life of intercession. No one is ever greater than their prayer life. Billy Graham is no greater than his prayer life.

Luis Palau, my dear brother and friend, is no greater than his prayer life. You are no greater than your intercessory life. This is what God has ordained you do with your life, investing it in time for eternity.

So this will be the emphasis this weekend. It's so universally open to everyone. And as we will see this week, God answers the prayers of even children, and sometimes children get answers to prayer that adults don't get.

Oh, Lord, teach us to be simple and childlike in our praying. Now, what do we pray for? We have total liberty as a child of God to pray for anything that we believe would be God's will. We can bring God any need which we have.

But listen. Most people have a high percentage of their prayers pointing toward themselves. Many people, their primary prayer is for their self, their family, their children, their friends, their neighbors.

They're not looking out to the world. They're focused inward. So I want to emphasize focusing outward.

I want us in this work of prayer, this ministry of prayer, to take the world on our heart and its awesome needs which are with us today. But remember, your prayer can be intensely personal. And thank God He does answer personal prayer.

I'm very happy that among you this evening is one of your local Christian leaders, Miss Hollister Jones Catherine. She and I served in the same country for many years. And so she will know why I say some of the things that I say.

Blind Bartimaeus prayed a very personal prayer, and he prevailed. By the way, what does it mean to prevail in prayer? When I was a boy, you heard a lot about prevailing prayer. I read books on prevailing prayer.

Nowadays I've gone to churches and people say, well, what do you mean prevailing prayer? Why don't you just say prayer? What does it mean to prevail in prayer? We're going to look at that, especially a little later on tonight. And we're going to look at that throughout tomorrow also. Prevailing prayer is not necessarily prayer that brings an answer that you see.

You may sometimes know you have prevailed when you do not yet see with your eyes the answer. But you have the assurance in your heart that God has heard, that God is going to answer. But we say prevailing prayer is the prayer that brings God's answer.

Praise God. So blind Bartimaeus got God's answer for himself. Can you picture how simple his prevailing was? How few words were used in his prevailing? Prevailing in prayer is not necessarily measured by how long your prayer is or how beautiful your words are in prayer.

Anyone can pray. The newest Christian begins to pray. As soon as someone is born again spiritually, he begins to pray.

I had the joy of leading a Muslim young man to Christ. The first thing that man did before he even testified, he broke out into prayer to Jesus. The Holy Spirit teaches us to begin to pray.

Praise God. So we can pray for ourselves and anyone can pray. Blind Bartimaeus.

Can you see him sitting by the roadside? Oh, I've seen, I suppose, several thousand blind beggars sitting beside the road in India. Maybe a little cloth, dirty cloth, sprayed on the ground. Maybe a dirty cloth kind of put over their head.

He said, mercy, mercy, mercy. Dayakaro, as we say in Indian, mercy, mercy, have mercy. Mercy, mercy.

Holding out, hoping that people will give a little coin. Jesus passed by someone like this blind Bartimaeus. He hears a sound.

What's going on? What's going on? Oh, Jesus of Nazareth is going by. Jesus of Nazareth. And instantly he calls out, Jesus of Nazareth, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Keep quiet, keep quiet. They say to him, don't bother the people. Keep quiet.

But he doesn't keep quiet. He calls out all the more. Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Jesus hears him and he stops. He says, call him. Someone says to him, he's calling for you.

Can you see the next moment? I can see that old blind man leap to his feet. Off goes that old dirty cloth from his head. And wherever he, the direction where he thought he heard the sound, he's out there trying to go to Jesus.

And Jesus asks him, what do you want? Lord, that I may receive my sight. He received his sight just like that. He prevailed.

He prevailed for an intensely personal need. Never hesitate to bring your need to Christ, large or small. Nothing that's important to you is trivial to God.

It may be trivial to other people, but not to God. If you have a need, bring your need to God in prayer. Of course, though I will not be talking about that kind of a prayer primarily.

Yet, apply it there also as God leads you. Petition is for yourself or for others. Intercession is always reaching out toward others, toward Christ's kingdom, toward the world.

Do you remember that woman who had been hemorrhaging for 12 years? Do you remember how the crowd of people were there following Jesus, pressing around him on all sides, jostling him, and he's trying to go down the road, and the crowd pushes in shouts, I've been jostled again and again in India by the crowds pushing in a street. Can you see that little timid woman? If her real condition were known to the people, they would shout to her to leave. She would be a defilement to them.

She didn't dare say anything out loud. But she says in her, if I can only touch the edge of his cloak, I'll be healed. Can you see that poor woman? How did she prevail in prayer? Not one audible word.

Do you know sometimes some of the greatest praying is done silently? There are times to pray out and cry out to God. Some of the greatest answers to prayer I've ever received were received from private, quiet, silent prayer. And this dear woman, with her hemorrhaging for 12 years, slips up and just slips in and gets her hand through between the jostling people and just touches his garment, and she's healed just like that.

And Jesus knows it. And he says, Who touched me? My master, everybody's pushing and shoving around here. What do you mean who's touched you? Everybody's jostling you.

He always said, Someone touched me because I felt power leave me. By the way, did you know whenever you minister for God, power goes out of your life? The trouble with so many people in Christian service, they're giving and giving and giving and they don't renew the power. And the Holy Spirit wants us to renew our strength by waiting on God, and we can be renewed in power.

So, praise God. Now, the next question that I want to ask is this. How long does it take to prevail in prayer? I want you to realize that it doesn't always take a long time.

There are times when prayer is prayed and prayed and prayed before it is answered. God hears all prayer, but not all prayer is instantly answered. We will look at that a little more.

Do you remember Moses' big sister, Miriam? Do you remember the story of Moses' birth? And Pharaoh's order that all boy babies be thrown into the Nile. And his mother kept him as long as she dared. And then she makes that little reed boat tenderly.

And whether she gives it to Miriam to put in the edge of the Nile or what, at least she stations Miriam there. And I'm sure the mother with a weeping heart, maybe weeping eyes, tenderly commits that little boat. And then when Pharaoh's daughter comes, it's Miriam who touches the need there.

She speaks to Pharaoh's daughter. She's the one that gets Moses' mother to care for him. And I'm sure as Moses grew up partly in his home and partly in the palace, I'm sure that his big sister Miriam often bossed

him around.

You know, Moses, if it wasn't for me, you wouldn't be alive. You remember now, I'm sure she told him over and over and over again. But the time came when Moses was grown, not only grown, he was now 80 years of age, past 80.

And he was a leader of Israel. And it was probably hard for sister Miriam to take that he didn't consult with her as much as he one time had to. Besides, Moses was a married man.

And she didn't like very well the interracial marriage that Moses had had. So the time came when probably her jealousy was abounding. And you remember how she criticized Moses' wife? A way to get back at Moses without saying it exactly in those words.

What does God think about criticism? How little we are aware of God's attitude toward a critical attitude in our hearts. And she's criticizing Moses' wife to Aaron, the older brother. And God hears it.

And suddenly God's voice rings out over the encampment. Moses, Aaron, Miriam, come here. Remember, Moses pitched the tent outside the camp.

Anyone wanting to get alone with God, you go out to the tent. A very wise provision that God made. That's where Moses would go and meet with God.

So, this had never happened before. God publicly announcing like over on the law speaker. Moses, Aaron, Miriam, come here.

And so the three, probably wondering what God wants. They start out to the tent outside the camp. And you remember whenever Moses would go into the tent, God's Shekinah cloud would come down and settle over the tent and probably move into the door as Moses went in to be face to face with God.

So that God's cloud comes down while the three are standing outside the tent. And God says, why were you not afraid to criticize your brother? And the clouds lifted. Aaron, no doubt, looked at Miriam.

Miriam, no doubt, looked at Aaron. Aaron says, why, she's covered with leprosy. An advanced state of leprosy from head to foot.

Oh! Instantly, Aaron turns to the criticized brother. My Lord, he says. Not my baby brother.

My Lord, don't let her die like this. Like an infant with the flesh half consumed. And Moses just instantly says a brief, short prayer.

Lord, have mercy. And just like that, in one sentence, Moses prevailed and Miriam was instantly healed of leprosy. But God said, if her father had spit in her face, she would be so disgraced, you would put her outside the camp of Israel for one week.

Put Miriam outside with the lepers. That's where the lepers stayed. Put her out there with the lepers.

In other words, I have spit in her face. Do you know, criticism is so abominable in the sight of God that he, as it were, will spit in the face of the one. Incidentally, many prayers are not heard because there is unforgiven criticalness in the background.

That hinders prayer on the mission field. It hinders prayer in the homeland. It hinders prayer in evangelical churches.

It hinders prayer in families. There may be families praying and praying for God to answer a prayer, but there's been a critical nature, a critical attitude for years, or maybe a short time, and the prayer is blocked. We'll see that just a little bit tomorrow.

So, but when there's nothing in between, I suppose instantly Aaron was so horrified, instantly Miriam was so horrified. She had been cursed with leprosy. She was instantly repentant.

So instantly God could answer. Moses got his answer just in a moment. Let's look at Elijah on Mount Carmel.

I love to think about Elijah. What a man of God he was. Do you remember when Elijah came out from nowhere, from the jungle, from the backwoods, from the outback, as they say in Australia? Here comes this man.

No one's ever known him, heard of him, seen him. He comes into King Ahab's presence. As Jehovah lives before whom I stand, there will be no rain nor dew until I give the word.

Ahab looks at him. Who do you think you are? He didn't say it, but I'm sure he thought it. You? What are you saying? Do you realize what that said? As Jehovah lives before whom I stand.

In the ancient empires, who came into the throne room? Only those invited the chief ministers. And they only stood. There was no chair provided in the throne room.

Only the throne. And Elijah was saying, I'm standing in the court of Jehovah. You? Dressed in that crude clothing? You unheard of? You untrained? You stand? You are chief minister to Jehovah? You are one of Jehovah's right-hand cabinets? Who do you think you are? And he was gone.

Ahab learned very quickly. There was no rain. There was no dew.

For three years there was no rain. Ahab was desperate. The nation was famishing.

The Bible tells us that he sent to all the surrounding nations and demanded them, is Elijah in your country? And they would send word back and certify, no, he is not here. And then one day Elijah shows himself at the Lord's direction. The Lord said, I'm going to reveal myself to Ahab.

You go. So Elijah went to Ahab. Ahab said, is that you, you troubler of Israel? Elijah said, I'm not troubling Israel.

Your Majesty, you're the trouble for Israel. But listen. Who's giving the orders now? Is he going to seize Elijah? Listen.

He realizes that the rain or the famine is in the hands of this man who says he stands in Jehovah's presence. So Elijah takes charge. He said, call for all the prophets of Baal and the prophets of all the Assyrians and call for the Israelites, all their representatives to come here to Mount Carmel.

God's going to send rain. Did Ahab say, who do you think you are? No, no, he didn't say that. He called them.

He called all the prophets of Baal. He gathered the Israelites from all across the country. He assembled on the mountainside of Mount Carmel like a natural amphitheater there.

And Elijah's in charge now. He said, all right. Now let's see.

He says to the prophets of Baal. The Bible doesn't say exactly these words, but you can see this thing for yourself. You say, your God is Baal.

Now, Baal is a prophet, is the God of rain, is it? Yes, yes, our God, Baal, is the God of rain. Yes, that's what we're needing. I've had rain for three years.

Your God is the God of rain. And your God is the God of fire? Yes. Baal is the God of fire.

All right. Now, he said, we're going to build two altars. You build an altar to Baal.

We're going to take two animals. You take your choice, whichever animal you want. You sacrifice your animal on your altar and you call on Baal, who is the God of rain.

That's what we need. And the God of fire. Don't put any fire on it.

Just put the altar there and the offering. And then you call on Baal to light the fire. Because he's the God of fire.

And when you've had your chance, then I'll call on Jehovah. So they build the altar. They're on exhibit.

The whole nation's represented. So they're on Mount Carmel on the hillside watching. And there's these prophets.

Hundreds of them. And they begin, O Baal, hear! O Baal, hear! O Baal, hear! O Baal, hear! Baal, hear! O Baal, hear! Hear, hear! O Baal, hear! And they call out over and over. Hour after hour after hour.

Elijah strolls up. He says, better call a little louder. It's obvious Baal isn't hearing you yet.

Speak up a little louder. Maybe he's sleeping. Maybe he's on a trip someplace.

Some, I don't know Hebrew, but some people tell me that a possible translation of the Hebrew is, maybe he's in the latrine. You know what the Bible says? It says they cried the louder they gashed themselves with knives. I can visualize that.

I've been there in India. I've watched the Shiite Muslims gash themselves with knives till the blood came down their head on their shirts. I stood only six feet from them while they were doing it.

I've heard them shouting over and over the name of their prophet. O Ali, Ali, Ali, Ali, Ali. I've heard them beating themselves on the chest over and over, louder and louder.

Beating themselves on the head. I turned to a Muslim by my side. I said, how can they stand? Oh, he said some of those will be sick in bed for a couple of weeks and some will die.

They'll never get over it. He said, we're proud to give ourselves for Allah. So I can picture that.

They're shouting, O Baal, hear! O Baal, hear! O Baal, hear! And they gash themselves, and the blood gushes out. And now they've had all morning, and it's three o'clock in the afternoon. And Elijah steps up.

He says, all right, men, be quiet. You had your opportunity. Baal has not answered.

He renews the altar of the Lord. He puts the sacrifice on the altar. He digs a trench around the altar.

He says, pour the water on these containers of water. The Hebrew word there is the word for the large container. There's two separate words in the Hebrew.

There are smaller containers. There's the large ones that hold 30 gallons per container. That's the word used.

Pour it on. Pour it on again. Pour it on again.

This place is just drenched with water. And then Elijah steps up there. How long does he pray? O Lord, let it be known that you are God and that I, your servant, have followed your instructions.

Just like that, the fire comes, falls from heaven. It burns up the sacrifice. It burns up the altar.

It evaporates all the water. And on the hillside are seated thousands of Israelites. And they leap to their feet shouting, Jehovah, he is God.

Jehovah, he is God. Jehovah, he is God. Elijah didn't have to ask which is the God who answered by fire.

When he said initially, the God who answers by fire, let him be God. The people said, well spoken. Well spoken.

Now they shout, Jehovah, he is God. Jehovah, he is God. Then Elijah says to Ahab, I say, Ahab, what does the law say? What does the law of Moses say? Any false prophet, anyone proclaiming a God other than Jehovah, what is the punishment? It's death.

All right, put all the prophets to death. So the prophets are put to death with a biblical penalty. Then Elijah says, all right, God's going to send rain.

King, your majesty, sit down and eat your supper quick because the rain's coming. Now what happened? How long did it take for him to get the rain? He's obeyed God in every single step. For three years he's been obeying God at the risk of his life.

He has been holding on in prayer in the secret by the Karath ravine. He's been holding on in prayer when he's hiding in the widow's house. He's been spending his time praying.

He couldn't be proclaiming the truth. He had to keep in hiding. So all he could do, it was what he did.

Elijah prevailed in prayer. For how long? Three years. But then, in public, 20, 30 words and that's it.

The fire falls from heaven. He didn't even get to the amen in his prayer. So now, Elijah says, Ahab, sit down and eat and drink.

The rain's coming. And the Bible says Elijah did what? Well, Lord, thank you that the rain's coming. No, no.

He knew the rain was coming. God said it was coming. But what did he do? He got on his knees.

The Bible says he got down before God and placed his head between his knees on the ground. That's about as low as you can get. How long do you think he prayed? I don't know.

My guess is he prayed for quite a while. There's still no thunder. He prayed on.

There's still no sign of rain that he sees. And after he stops, he says to his servant, Go out and look over the brow of the mountain toward the sea and see if you see anything out there. Any cloud? The servant comes back.

He says, There's nothing. Elijah puts his head down between his knees. Again, Elijah calls on God.

How long? Probably longer than the first time. The Bible doesn't say how long. Go back and look.

He comes back and says, There's nothing. Six times the servant goes. Six times Elijah goes back down on his face before God, wrestling with God in prayer, and still no answer.

And the seventh time, he says, There's just a little cloud about the size of a man's hand out over the ocean. Elijah leaps to his feet. He says, King, pitch up your chariot.

It's time to go. The rain is on the way. Now, do you know what kind of horse he had? I'm sure it must have been the fastest horses in the country.

The kings in those days collected horses, and I'm sure he had the best. And how did the kings go? They often had a person who ran before them, announced the king is coming. And what happens now? Listen to that little old dried up Elijah, out from the jungle, living on the coarsest form of food.

He starts to run in front of him. Hurry up, King, hurry up, hurry up. Hurry up, hurry up.

The rain is coming. Hurry up. And I'm sure the chariot driver whipped the horses, and the horses began to go down the road, and Elijah kept in front of the horses.

How could that infidel do that? How far did he run? The Bible says all the way to Jezreel. How far was that? Thirty miles. How could he lie to do that? Well, the Bible tells you.

It says the hand of the Lord came upon him. But I want to ask you something. Why was the man who could pray 20 seconds and get far from heaven, why did he pray on and on and on and on? For the rain that God said he was sending, so he knew he was praying in accordance with God's will, and yet the answer did not come.

Brothers and sisters, there are mysteries in prayer that I cannot explain and that you will never be able to explain. We're going to look at some of the reasons for that. Did you know that you can be praying in the will of God and still sometimes not receive instant answers to your prayer? Perhaps I should say I'm sure all of you have experienced that if you're living a life of prayer.

Yes, I have prayed for things which I still do not have the answer. Some of the most famous of God's saints have prayed years before they got some of the answers. Why? Wasn't it God's will? Yes, it was God's will.

There are factors in delaying the answer to prayer, and we're going to look at that in just a bit. So I want us to realize that there are mysteries in prayer, but God hears prayer. God does not forget our prayer.

When we pray in the will of God, hold on in faith, be bold, be important in prayer, you will receive your answer if you faint not. In due time, you will receive your answer if you don't faint, if you don't give up. But what can we do to make our praying more effective? Now, when I wrote my book, Touch the World Through Prayer, which has been so widely used by God, my first book and used more than any book I've written thus far, it made it a manual of intercession.

Why did I write the second book some time later, Mighty Prevailing Prayer? Because of this problem, the problem of unanswered prayer, the problem of how can we intensify our prayer? How can we, how can you, how can you, how can you make your prayer more effective? And this is what we're going to be talking about the rest of this evening and tomorrow. How can we make our prayer more effective? How can we prevail in prayer? Praise God.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/eRFPJ7R6WNI.mp4>

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