

# James 5:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

## Analysis

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**Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours; he prayed earnestly and it did not rain for three and a half years. James demystifies prophetic prayer: Elijah's powerful intercession flowed from earnest faith, not superhuman status.

Reformed teaching encourages bold prayer grounded in God's Word. Elijah's example assures believers their prayers matter.

## Historical Context

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Elijah's drought narrative (1 Kings 17-18) was well-known. James highlights his humanity to inspire ordinary Christians under persecution to pray with prophetic persistence.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. What situations need Elijah-style prayer?
2. How can you grow in persistent intercession?
3. Who can join you in bold prayer efforts?

## Interlinear Text

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Ἠλίας	ἄνθρωπος	ἦν	ὁμοιοπαθὴς	ἡμῖν	καὶ	
Elias	a man	was	subject to like passions as	we are	and	
G2243	G444	G2258	G3663	G2254	G2532	
προσευχῇ	προσηύξατο	τοῦ	μὴ	ἔβρεξεν	καὶ	οὐκ ἔβρεξεν
earnestly	he prayed	G3588	not	it rained	and	not it rained
G4335	G4336		G3361	G1026	G2532	G3756 G1026
ἐπὶ	τῆς	γῆς	ἐνιαυτοῦς	τρεῖς	καὶ	μῆνας ἕξ.
on	G3588	the earth	years	by the space of three	and	months six
G1909		G1093	G1763	G5140	G2532	G3376 G1803

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Kings 17:1** (Parallel theme): And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

**Luke 4:25** (Parallel theme): But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

**Revelation 11:6** (Parallel theme): These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

**1 Kings 18:1** (Parallel theme): And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

**Acts 14:15** (Parallel theme): And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

**Acts 10:26** (Parallel theme): But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

**Romans 11:2** (Parallel theme): God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

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