

2 Kings God Answers Prayers

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[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Take your Bibles and turn with me to 2 Kings chapter 6.

Thank you for loving these young people. Thank you for helping them. We are in an all-out war against the devil and for the cause of our Lord and King Jesus Christ to get the gospel around the world, and I'm so glad that he's using them.

Now, if you're here Thursday night, Mark Coffey and his wife will be trying to get you to buy a camp T-shirt for a donation. And so Thursday night, bring some cash because he's going to come after you.

All right, 2 Kings chapter 6 verse 18. That says to help you, Mark. I'm getting warmed up. Nobody shows up Thursday night for church, so it's all your fault. 2 Kings chapter 6 and verse 18.

Now, I want to read you a passage of Scripture. Scripture, and obviously for the time's sake, you won't get as much of it as I had maybe wanted you to, but I want you to just realize, as I preach through the Bible, I always say, God, what are you trying to say here?

[1 : 0 1] What are you doing here? And in this passage of Scripture, what's going to happen is Elisha's going to pray, and God's going to answer. And the story's going to be pretty wild.

You're going to hear the story, and you're going to be like, well, that's crazy, man. Look how Elisha could pray and how God would answer prayer. And wouldn't it be needed if God would do that for us? But the Bible says he does and will, and we do have a God who hears and answers prayer.

And I'm going to try to get as much of that to you as I can. But I want you to read the story just because I think it helps you realize how confident a man of God in the Bible was when he prayed. He just had a basic assumption.

I'm going to ask. He's going to do it. I'm going to ask. He's going to do it. Read with me. The Bible said, When they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the Lord and said, Hey, God, smite these people, I pray you, with blindness.

Look at the answer. And he smote them with blindness. He said, God, smite them with blindness. And he smote them with blindness. According to the word of Elisha. God just did what Elisha asked him to. And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city.

[1 : 5 9] Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek. But he led them to Samaria. And it came to pass when they were coming to Samaria that Elisha said, Lord, open the eyes of these men that they may see.

And the Lord opened their eyes. And they saw, and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. And we'll get to the Samaria part on Thursday night in the Gore Center meeting. And there'll be the persecution. And then God will bring great relief to them.

But I just want you to notice this right here. I think sometimes we have kind of gotten to the place where maybe prayer doesn't seem to be so real and so big. And yet in the Bible, it's just assumed that you would believe it.

I want you to go back with me to verse 18. I wish you'd underline in your Bible, Elisha prayed. And he says, smite, and the Lord smote. You ought to underline it. He said, smite, and the Lord smote. And then in verse 20, he said, hey, Lord, open the eyes.

And the Lord opened their eyes. Dr. Walter Wilson said, why pray when you can worry? Asking God and expecting an answer was exactly the lifestyle we see in Elisha.

[3 : 02] I'm going to show you several things here tonight. Asking was just unashamedly the way it was done. God wants us to pray. God has promised to answer prayer.

What is it then that hinders our prayers? And let's not fall into the trap of being prayerless. Father, I pray now that you take these next 15, 20 minutes and help us to see quickly from your word that you are a God that answers prayer.

I pray you'd show your power. I pray you'd move in your people's lives. I pray you'd motivate them and encourage them that they can ask you and that you will hear an answer. And God, help us to become more of a praying people. In Jesus' name, amen.

First thing I wish you'd write down somewhere is that unashamedly Elisha prays and asks God for things. Elisha knows that we ought to know that God hears and answers prayer. Look at Psalm 65, 2.

Right quick. I'm going to have to just skip through most of the verses and skip them. But look at this. God is, O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. That's a description.

[4 : 01] So the psalmist says, God, you're the one that hears prayer. And since you're the one that hears prayer, everybody in the world will come to you. Idols don't hear prayer. Idols don't answer prayer. But God is big enough and strong enough and powerful enough to answer prayer.

And so we could spend a lot of time on that verse. I really wish you'd memorize that verse and think about it. O you that hears prayer. O God that hears prayer. Everybody will come to you.

You see, God wants us to pray. The Bible says in Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 6, Without faith it's impossible to please him. For he that comes to God must believe that he is. And that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Look at this. You know what praying is? Praying is believing God. You know what praying is? Praying is going to God and actually believing he's going to do it. When Elisha said, hey, God, close your eyes. Elisha was expecting.

He was fully expecting that God would hear him and answer him. And that God was that big. So he went to God believing that God was. He went to God believing that God would hear him. He went to God believing that God would reward him.

[5 : 01] And God did. Did you know God doesn't do a lot of things with us because we just don't believe him anymore? The Bible says in Matthew chapter 13 and verse 58, He said that he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

In other words, their unbelief hindered God from doing a work. You're not going to believe this verse, but it's in the Bible. Mark it down. Look it up and let it be your own. The Bible says in Mark chapter 6 and verse 5, He could there do no mighty works.

Look at that verse. It's right behind me. He could there do no mighty works. Say that he lay hands upon a few sick folk and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. He couldn't even understand how they couldn't believe him.

He couldn't even understand how they couldn't believe him. Our God wants us to unashamedly come to him in prayer and ask him for things. Our praying would be a sign we really believed God and believed that he would do it.

God wants to answer prayer so we'd be full of joy. That's what he said in John chapter 16 and verse 23. The Bible said, And in that day you shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name.

[6 : 09] He will give it to you. Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name. Ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full. Well, God wants his people to have the privilege and the pleasure of asking a God that hears and answers prayer.

If Elisha could do it, we ought to be able to do it. In 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 7, he said, Cast all your care on him. He cares. He doesn't want you worrying. He doesn't want you all tore up.

He doesn't want you frustrated. He doesn't want you feeling that way. He said, Cast all your care on him. Psalm 55, 22. He said the same thing. Cast your burden on the Lord and he shall sustain thee. So, here's what Elisha just prays.

I was reading that. I was, honestly, I had that in the outline already to go all the way down to the end of chapter 7. And I was just going to say in the first thing, you know, Elisha prayed, God answered. Now, praying over the message and praying for you and thinking about you.

And it's like the Lord said, won't you tell them I hear prayer? Won't you remind them that I'm a God that likes to be prayed to? Why don't you remind them that I want them to pray to me?

[7 : 11] Won't you show them that Elisha just said, God do it. And God did it. That's a crazy thought. I want you to know this. And this is, we're out of the passage.

I'm just going to show you in the Bible. God wants us to pray. Would you write these verses down and look them up later? God wants us to pray. In Luke chapter 18 and verse 1, the Bible said, Men ought always to pray and not to faint.

Jesus was doing the talking. Men ought always to pray and not to faint. The apostle Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5, 17, pray without ceasing. In Philippians chapter 4 and verse 6, he said, I don't want you worrying.

I want you praying. I don't want you worrying. I want you praying. He said, be careful for nothing. But in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

And I'll give you peace you won't believe. God wants his people to pray. He wanted them to pray that they wouldn't enter the temptation. Matthew 26, 41. He wanted them to pray so they could get stuff.

[8 : 12] Did you know that God wants you to have stuff? And he wants you to ask him for it so he can give it to you so you know he gave it to you. This is a crazy verse. You're probably not going to like it. You're probably going to think it sounds charismatic.

But I'm going to read it out of the Bible. Look if you would at James chapter 4, verse 1 and verse 2. If you would. James chapter 4 and verse 1 and verse 2. See, God wants his people to pray. And honestly, there's so many verses I could have given you.

Just take these. In the story, Elisha says, God smite them and he smote them. God give them, open their eyes. God open their eyes. It was like Elisha just assumed God hears prayer. Elisha just assumed that God answered prayer.

And he prayed that way. Look at James 4, 1. For where do wars and fightings come among you? Don't they come of your lust, of your desires, of what you want?

That war in your members. You've got stuff you want and you wish you could get it. So in verse 2, you lust, you want, but you don't have it. You kill and desire to have, you can't obtain it. You fight in war, yet you have not because you ask not.

[9 : 15] We ought to ask God. We ought to ask God. We ought to ask God to meet our financial need. We ought to ask God to give us that job. We ought to ask God to give us that baby. We ought to ask God to help us with that health issue.

God's up in heaven saying, I still hear prayer and I still answer prayer. Where are the people that believe me enough to ask me? God wants us to ask him in prayer. Did you know that God has promised big answers to prayer?

The Bible is so full of God saying, I am the big God that answers big prayers. Look, if you would, at Psalm chapter 81 and verse 10. Psalm chapter 81 and verse 10. I am the Lord thy God.

God's up in prayer. Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Open thy mouth wide and I'll fill it. Now, if that's not a crazy verse. Here's what God said. When you pray, just go ahead and open your mouth and say big stuff.

Just say big stuff. I'll do it. That's a crazy verse, isn't it? He said, open your mouth wide and I'll fill it. Look, if you would, at Jeremiah chapter 33 and verse 3. I would assume you all know the verse.

[10 : 12] Well, look at it. Call unto me and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things that you know not. Hey, just call on me and see if I can't answer prayer. Just call on me and see if I can't answer prayer.

I heard a famous preacher say one time a long time ago. He said, when a lost man doesn't have a job and a saved man doesn't have a job, the saved man ought to have confidence and the lost man doesn't have because the lost man's got to figure out how you can get a job. And the saved man knows how he can.

He just talked to God. God hears and answers prayer. God hears and answers prayer. Look at what he said in Romans chapter 8 and verse 32. In Romans chapter 8 and verse 32, he said, He spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all.

How shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Do you know what God's up in heaven saying, Guys, you can't ask for anything big because I've already given you the biggest. You can't ask for anything big. I gave you Jesus.

I gave you my son. And so the little pittance that you want to ask for are nothing. Just ask. I give you all things. In 2 Corinthians chapter 6, 2 Chronicles chapter 16 and verse 9, God's eyes run to and fro throughout the earth looking for somebody who can show himself strong in their behalf.

[11 : 18] God wants people to pray and ask. George Mueller was a great preacher, great Christian. He was a German living in Great Britain. And George Mueller wanted everybody to know that God would hear and answer prayer.

And he knew you could preach all the messages you wanted to preach, but God wouldn't. People might not believe that. So he set up an entire ministry to take care of orphans. And he said the real purpose of the ministry, the orphans, wasn't the orphans. It was to show people I can ask God in prayer.

And God will answer my prayer. He started the orphanage. He said, I need a place. God gave him a place. He said, I need furniture. God gave him furniture. I need plates and forks and spoons. And God gave him plates and forks and spoons. And on about the day he was about ready to open it.

He said, I forgot to ask God for kids. He said, I got everything, but I don't have any kids. He said, so I asked God for kids and God sent kids. God is a great prayer answering God.

Here's some Bible verses for you. God wants to answer prayer and he promises to. In Matthew 7, 7, you know the verse. He says, ask and it shall be given. Seek and you shall find.

[12 : 17] Knock and it shall be opened. He that asketh, receiveth. He that seeketh, findeth. He that knocketh, it's open to him. He says in verse 11, Matthew chapter 7, there in that same passage of scripture, he said this.

If you know how to give good gifts to your kids. What do you think I am? I know how to give good gifts to my kids too. Your kids are allowed to come ask. God's like, well, come ask me. I'm a good dad. I'm a good dad. In Matthew chapter 21 and verse 22, he said, all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer.

Believing, you shall receive them. Just ask all things. In Mark chapter 11 and verse 24, he said, what things forever you desire, whatever it is you want, you pray and believe and you'll receive it.

John 14, 13, he said, whatsoever you'll ask in my name, I'll do it so my father will be glorified. John 15, 7, he said, ask what you will and it shall be done. I know none of these verses are true.

They're just Bible, right? How many of you believe it's the Bible? Say amen. If it's the Bible, it ought to be true. Amen. Amen. 1 John chapter 3 and verse 22, he says, whatsoever we ask, we receive of him.

[13 : 21] Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him. This is the confidence that we have in him in 1 John 5, 14, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. For the sake of time, I am running like a crazy man, not giving you the illustrations, not showing you this, but I just wish you'd get a hold of something.

In the story, Elisha asked and God answered. In the story, Elisha asked and God answered. You serve a God who wants to answer your prayers.

One illustration. Years ago, I was in the first church that Betty and I started. I was 23 years old when I started the church and I really messed the finances of the church up.

And so somebody had to lose a salary. I had me and an assistant pastor. I paid the assistant pastor the exact same thing I made. And if I'd have fired him, I could have kept my salary. We'd had it. But I decided to give up my salary.

And I lived for two years without the church paying me. And I didn't have another job. And Betty didn't have another job. I just figured I could see if God would do for me what he did for George Mueller. And for two years, Betty can tell you, we ask.

[14 : 28] And God answered. And worked miracles that would raise the hair on your arm if I told you all of them. It was a Sunday morning. It was a Sunday morning. And God really led me to do this.

It was a Sunday morning. And I was outside. And Betty told me we had a bill. And I went outside. And I was sitting out in the cold on a rock. And I said, God, if you don't give me \$100 a day, I can't pay my bills. And I'm going to look really bad.

And I'm not telling anybody that's not happening. But I need you to come through. And I told everybody in the church, do not ever give me money directly. Because I don't want to be thanking you for money. I want to be thanking God. So put it in cash and put it in this box over here.

And I walked in. And Jack Jones walked up to me and handed me \$100 bill. And I said, Jack, please don't do that. I've asked you not to do that. And Jack said, all I know is that at 8 o'clock this morning, I had this extremely intense pressure on me to give you \$100.

I said, at 8 o'clock, I was on a rock asking God for \$100. God answers prayer. And why doesn't he answer our prayers? Six minutes and three pages of notes.

[15 : 28] How about this? Because we pray selfish prayers. In James chapter 4 and verse 3, he said, you ask and receive not because you ask amiss that you may consume it upon your own lust.

In Proverbs, first off, you know, God's not in the prayer and answer business like the prosperity gospel teaches at all. God's in the prayer and answer business that brings honor and glory to his name. But we can ask. The second reason God might not answer our prayer, and I just picked a handful of them, is we're selfish.

When you live selfish lives, God's kind of like, I'm not going to bless you. In Proverbs chapter 21 and verse 13, he said, whoso stops his ears at the cry of the poor, he'll cry, but he won't be heard.

You know, we get money, we get things, and God blesses us, but we're selfish and keep it. In Mark 11, 25, we hold on to unforgiveness. And we go in and we stand praying, but we don't forgive.

And God doesn't hear, and God doesn't answer. In 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 7, we don't treat our wives right. This is where I would have really honed in just a second if I had more time.

[16 : 31] But do you realize that God's up in heaven saying, I don't like the way you treat your wives. I'm not going to answer your prayers. That's a crazy verse, isn't it? You want to know why your prayers aren't answered? Because they're hindered, because you're not living with her according to knowledge.

God said, I don't answer your prayers because you don't believe me when you do pray. You don't believe me when you do pray. You just pray the prayers, go through the motions, but you don't really believe me. In James chapter 1 and verse 5, he said, if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God.

That gives to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But you ask in faith, no doubt, no wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed.

Let not that man think that he'll receive anything. I'll give you two or three more verses here and I quit. I'm afraid we've fallen more into the sin of not praying.

I'm not sure if it's the fatalistic, deterministic doctrines that we've kind of accepted that God's going to do what God's going to do. We've let Calvinism creep into our hearts to the point where what's the use of praying?

[17 : 35] Because whatever God's going to do, he's going to do. Which would be very not what the scriptures are teaching us. Elisha just prayed and expected God to do it. Samuel said in 1 Samuel chapter 12 and verse 23 that he would not quit praying.

He would not sin against God by ceasing to pray for them. You and I ought to know this. Prayer has got to be a central real part of our lives. In Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 18 he said, praying always.

Do you know that nowadays modern Christians, we don't pray because we've got doctors. We don't pray because we've got lawyers. We don't pray because we've got Google. We don't pray because we can figure it out.

We don't pray because we know what the weather's going to do. We've seen it on the television. God wants us praying at all times. In Acts chapter 6 and verse 4, the early church knew it was so important.

That's why they elected those first deacons so they'd have more time to dedicate in prayer. We wouldn't have to worry about stuff themselves. We would give ourselves continually to prayer. I think maybe we don't pray because we don't enjoy God.

[18 : 40] We talk about him. Spend little to no time with him. He said, the people draws nigh unto me with their mouth and with their lips, but their hearts far from me.

We ought to seek God. We ought to seek God. It ought to be like I know from reading my Bible, there's a God in heaven that hears and answers prayer, and he wants me to come looking for him and asking him.

Wouldn't it be amazing if we asked God and he did big stuff in our lives? Wouldn't it be amazing if we saw God answer prayer? In Jeremiah chapter 29 and verse 11, this is what the Bible said. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord.

I think thoughts of peace, not evil, to give you an unexpected end. Verse 12, he said, pray unto me and I will listen to you. Pray unto me and I will listen to you.

I'll hearken to you. Verse 13, he said, and when you seek me, you will find me. When you search for me with all your heart. The story is so beautiful to me.

[19 : 40] What Elisha does is just such a wonderful thing. It's amazing. I know what we think. We think he's a Bible character, and so Bible characters can do what we can't do. But the Bible tells us over in the New Testament that Elijah was a man of like passions, like as we are.

So Elisha can do it. Elisha can do it. We can do it. Well, Elisha's a man like us. And Elisha said, God, would you make them all blind? Thank you. Boom, they're blind. And he said, all right, God, you can open our eyes now.

God, open our eyes. And Elisha didn't have any special track you don't have. He doesn't play favorites. We serve a God who hears and answers our prayers. And we can't stop praying.

We need to pray for God to let us see people saved. We need to pray for God to help us with our financial needs. We need to, in my devotions this morning, I was doing a bunch of devotions this morning. While I was doing devotions this morning, one guy, one guy spent all of his money on doctors and never talked to God in prayer.

You know, you and I are supposed to spend time talking to God and praying and asking God and begging God and expecting God and believing God. I think the thing that just thrills me is this.

[20 : 48] Elisha didn't even bat an eye. I read that story and it's like the craziest thing I've ever read. Elisha said, Lord, blind him. Thank you. Lord, open your eyes now. Thank you. There was no special incantations, no special movements, no special posture, no nothing.

He just knew God heard prayer. Do we? It's time for us to pray. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

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