

The Key to Keeping Your Faith Strong While Waiting for A Miracle—Thanksgiving

The Old Testament prophet Elijah models an important characteristic to walking in the supernatural power of God and receiving miracles. He knew what it meant to celebrate a seed like it actually was the harvest.

In the same way—*particularly at Thanksgiving*—we need to start seeing all signs of breakthrough with a **prophetic** eye and learn how to thank God for the small cloud in the same way we would thank Him for the abundance of rain.

Let me explain.

I believe Elijah's account in 1 Kings 18 is very relevant to us today when it comes to thanksgiving and experiencing the supernatural power of God in our lives. We don't always make the link, but **thanksgiving** is a vital key to experiencing the miraculous. So many of us stop short of our complete miracle because we have never learned how to give thanks for the seed like it was the complete harvest.

We reserve thanksgiving for the when miracle comes to full fruition. We wait for the spectacular. We wait for the total healing. We wait for everything to come into perfect alignment and we get exactly what we have been believing God for.

This is not the essence of faith. Faith is not required when we receive everything we have been praying for; it is essential when we are living in the gap between our present situation and what we are believing for. So how do we maintain faith to keep us going while we are waiting for our miracle? The key to sustaining faith is giving thanks for all signs of progress.

This is not wishful thinking. This is not positive confession theology. This is having prophetic vision to see beyond the external shell of circumstance and actually see the harvest that is within the seeds of improvement.

Think about it. A harvest of apples is contained in a seed. An apple does not become an apple when it is fully grown; an apple begins its life in seed form. In the same way, **miracles** do not come to pass only when you receive the complete breakthrough, restoration or healing. Every step of progress that we experience on the way to wholeness and fullness should be celebrated like a seed of the complete miracle.

So, with the holiday season staring us down, here are some important keys that we can learn from Elijah in 1 Kings 18 to release the faith-building power of thanksgiving in our lives:

1. Elijah had ears to hear in the Spirit before others heard in the natural. “Then Elijah said to Ahab, ‘Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain’” (1 Kings 18:41, NKJV).

Elijah heard the sound of the abundance of rain—however, I have to believe this was no natural sound. He was listening in the spirit realm. I know this because if King Ahab had also heard the sound of rain, he might have responded differently. He did not. Instead, “Ahab went up to eat and drink” (v. 42).

Prophetic hearing positions you to hear God’s Word amidst the noise of circumstance or the silence of lack. Regardless of what is or is not going on, you have a sure anchor in the eternal, unchanging Word of the Lord. This is your advantage and your key to sustaining faith-preserving thanksgiving.

You become the greatest catalyst of breakthrough when you learn how to hear what God is saying and pray these eternal realities over the present conditions. It does not deny the presence of drought; it simply chooses to focus on and express gratitude for the abundance of rain that is locked up in the

small cloud.

In the same way, the promise of breakthrough for you is contained in the seed of Scripture. It is not some mystical, outlandish thing. The Word of the Lord is clearly unveiled in Scripture. Immerse yourself in that book of promise, and ask the **Holy Spirit** to give you a unique assurance of abundant rain for your need or present situation.

2. Elijah responded to what he heard. “So Ahab went up to eat and drink. Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, ‘Go up now, look toward the sea’” (vv. 42-43).

We return to the looming reality that both Elijah and King Ahab were facing. Even though the Word of the Lord assured abundant rain, there was no rain visible in the natural realm ... yet! Both men responded to what they heard—Elijah heard in the spirit, while Ahab heard with purely natural ears.

I am amazed at how many believers respond to God’s promises from an Ahab perspective. Basically, they do nothing: “There is no rain now, which means there will no rain ... ever.” The miracle doesn’t come with fast-food, “your way right away” speed, so we mistakenly conclude that God is not in the miracle-working business anymore.

Spiritual maturity is developed as we learn how to persevere and persist, anchored on God’s Word even when our natural circumstances show absolutely no signs of improvement. Elijah told his servant to go out and look for signs of rain. The servant returned, telling Elijah that he saw nothing. How did Elijah respond? “Seven times Elijah told him to go and look” (v. 43, NLT). Perseverance.

Elijah positioned himself to be thankful, for not only did he hear the word of the Lord, but he responded to it like it was true. This is what compelled him to not accept no as an answer

from his servant.

So many of us abandon breakthrough or step away from our miracle because at the first, second or even third prayer, we appear to see no results. Elijah heard the word of the Lord and responded like it was true. This caused him to keep pressing in until what he heard became what he saw.

3. Elijah celebrated the small cloud like it was the abundance of rain. “Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, ‘There is a cloud, as small as a man’s hand, rising out of the sea!’” (v. 44, NKJV).

A vital key to walking in the **supernatural power** of God is to increase our awareness of what God is doing. We must remember that the harvest is in the small seed and the outpouring is in the small cloud. Contemporary leaders who practice this perspective are the ones who are experiencing some of the greatest measures of breakthrough in their ministries.

One notable example is healing evangelist Randy Clark, from Global Awakening. In his gatherings, as people receive **prayer** for healing, Randy encourages those who experience any kind of improvement in their physical conditions to wave their hands around and celebrate the progress. Why? It reorients their perspective to what God is doing and builds corporate faith through thanksgiving.

Focusing on what God is doing causes us to be thankful. Instead of being disappointed that we did not receive 100 percent restoration of hearing, sight or removal of pain, we celebrate the 30 percent improvement. As a result, our faith is strengthened to keep on believing for the 60 percent and 80 percent and, ultimately, the 100 percent. Thanksgiving builds our faith, and that faith sustains us while we continue to believe for the complete miracle—for ourselves and for others.

I encourage you—this season and always—to be thankful for all of the little signs of blessing and breakthrough. Elijah

focused on the small cloud, not the empty sky. All progress, improvement and change is worth thanksgiving and celebration. Sure, it may be a cloud the size of a man's hand, but Elijah responded to that little thing like it was an abundance of rain.

"Then Elijah shouted, 'Hurry to Ahab and tell him, "Climb into your chariot and go back home. If you don't hurry, the rain will stop you!'" (v. 44, NLT).

Why the shout and urgency? Elijah knew that contained in that cloud was the massive outpouring he heard about and saw in the spirit.

In the same way, I encourage you to give thanks for every sign of improvement, healing, restoration and progress in your situation. Remember, the seed contains the harvest. And every step forward is a step toward complete breakthrough!

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