

Obedience in Hidden Prayer

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[0 : 00] Now at the beginning of each of the chapters that we read this evening, in 1 Kings 17 and also at 1 Kings 18, we are told about how the Lord told Elijah what he, the Lord, was going to do.

First of all, Elijah says to Ahab, as the Lord God of Israel liveth before my stand, there shall not be dew rain upon these years, but according to my word. And the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and so on.

And then at the beginning of chapter 18 came to pass, after many days the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth. So it is the Lord who is very much in control of these situations, but it is clear as well, from verses 3 to 5 in chapter 17, he tells him to go to the brook Gareth, and thou shalt drink of the brook.

I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord, for he went and dwelt by the brook Gareth before Jordan.

[1 : 12] And again at verses 18 and 9, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zaanath, which below hath decided, and dwelt there. Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

And although one might feel, just from verse 1, chapter 17, where Elijah says to Ahab, you know, as the Lord liveth before me, there shall not be dew or rain these years, but according to my word.

You might almost think that was Elijah's own idea, sort of thing. But it's quite clear from these other verses that, you know, this is all of the Lord's own planning and undertaking and commandment.

And Elijah is seen to be very much, you know, the passive but obedient servant who just does what the Lord tells him. Again, there we see at the beginning of chapter 18, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Go, show thyself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.

So although Elijah said, you know, to Ahab, there won't be any rain or dew except according to my word, you know, in the name of the Lord, before whom I stand. The Lord says to Elijah, you know, I am going to send rain on the earth.

[2 : 21] And so it's quite clear that the Lord is in charge. And yet from both the opening of chapter 17 and also into chapter 18, where we see Elijah speaking with such authority, you know, when he says to Ahab, the king of Israel, when he sees him, I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's huts, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baal.

Now therefore send and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal, 450, and the prophets of the groves, 400, which eat at Jezebel's table.

You know, he's almost commanding the king of Israel here. And then from verse 20 onwards, Ahab sent unto the children of Israel, gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel, and so on.

As we go on towards the end of that chapter, Elijah seems to be in command of the situation. He is speaking with an authority and with a confidence, which he seems, with all respect, he seems not to have at other times.

You know, in chapter 19, for example, he's running for his life. And he seems almost kind of subdued when he's, you know, silent by the brute kerat, hiding away. And when he goes to the willow of Zarephath, he's all, you know, as he ought to be, he's all meekness and humility.

[3 : 41] He says, yes, of course, you bake what you need of the bread, but, you know, bring me some first if you would. You know, he's kindly, he's courteous, he's humble. He doesn't have the sense of authority and power and strength that he has when he's facing up to Ahab.

So, okay, the Lord gives him that strength, no doubt, but he speaks on certain occasions with an authority, with a confidence, which he seems not to have at other times.

As we mentioned, chapter 17, verse 1, almost seems to imply as though it was Elijah's own idea to have no rain and to have this sort of drought and famine.

And, you know, James, in his letter, almost kind of implies that that might be the case. If we turn to James 5, remember where it says, The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, in verse 16 onwards.

And yet, as we saw, Elijah asks only on God's explicit purpose.

[5 : 06] commands. What he acts and what he asks for, if he asks, you know, we're not told in the Old Testament that he does, but we're told in the New that he did. What he does, how he acts, is only on God's explicit command.

You know, how do we reconcile such an apparent contradiction? Did God tell Elijah to say it? Or is Elijah praying to God that it should happen? And so God does as Elijah asks.

We seem to have an apparent contradiction between what we read in 1st Kings and what we read in the letter of James. Well, of course, we can reconcile these quite simply because they are indeed.

The supposed contradiction is only an apparent contradiction. Clearly, from what we read in 1st Kings, clearly it is the Lord who has moved Elijah to do everything that he has done.

And in so far as James tells us that Elijah prayed for these things, clearly it can only have been the Lord who has moved Elijah to pray.

[6 : 11] And to pray particularly for this which the Lord intends to bring about and must have intended beforehand. Because, you know, he says about the ravens, I have commanded.

Past tense. I have commanded the ravens to feed thee and the widow of Zarephath. I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. Does God just sort of think it up after Elijah prays and says, well, this is a good idea.

Let's not have any rain on the earth for three and a half years. No, it's a good idea. In fact, I'll command the ravens now. And I'll command this widow woman. No, it's all intimated to Elijah that which it's news to him.

He doesn't know about the ravens until God tells him. He doesn't know about the widow of Zarephath until God tells him. The Lord has this already in his plan and in his purpose, which he only reveals to Elijah as Elijah needs to know.

Therefore, given that all the word of God must be true, because Jesus says in John 17, you know, sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth.

[7 : 20] And therefore, both James and 1 Kings needs must be the truth. So clearly, it is the Lord who has moved Elijah to pray about this drought and then famine and so on.

The absence of rain. It is the Lord who has moved him to do it. And when he asks for it, the Lord does it. And the Lord gives him the confidence and authority to face down Ahab and to make these intimations to him.

It is the Lord who moves him to do and to pray for the Lord's will. But of course, this is exactly what we find also in the New Testament. Romans tells us, chapter 8, verse 26, Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, our weaknesses.

For we know not what we should pray for as we ought. Is it just us? Just in the days of the Romans? Or just Paul? Or is it Christians in every age? Is it believers in every age?

If Elijah is a man of like passions with us, the same weaknesses, the same problems as James tells us. And the Word of God cannot be anything but true. And therefore, if he had the same weaknesses and infirmities as we do, then clearly, Elijah as well wouldn't know what to pray for as he ought.

[8 : 39] Except the Spirit moved him. Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Cannot be described. The Lord knows that which we cannot put into words. And he moves us to cry, to pray to him, even if we cannot articulate the speech, the words, or make the right words in our utterance.

He knows what is in his heart. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Key thing there, according to the will of God. 1 John 5 tells us, remember, verse 14. This is the confidence that we have in him. That if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.

And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. So James tells us, then, you know, that Elijah prayed about this drought, this lack of

rain.

[9 : 56] These prayers of Elijah are not explicitly recorded in the Old Testament. That's just a statement of fact. You wouldn't know from reading 1 Kings 17, verse 1, and 1 Kings 18, verse 1, and so on, that this was Elijah praying about these things because it's not explicitly recorded there.

We wouldn't know that he had implanted the throne of grace for these things to happen unless it was recorded for us in the New Testament.

These things are not explicitly recorded in the Old Testament, what James tells us. And it is obviously only the Holy Ghost moving and inspiring James to write as he did, which reveals to us that the drought and subsequent famine that followed in Israel was in response to the effectual firement prayers of Elijah.

But what motivates Elijah to pray this way? Because he doesn't know what he should pray for as he ought. It is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ that moves him.

And the Lord hears and knows what the Spirit desires. Even if Elijah can't find the right words, even if we can't find the right words, if we ask according to his will, we know that we are heard and that he hears us.

[11 : 19] And the Lord has revealed this through his seven dreams and caused him to write it down so that we ourselves will understand that what happens is not just, you know, Elijah making it up out of his own mind.

It is the Lord puts it in the heart of Elijah. The Lord has prepared it and the Lord clearly moves Elijah to pray it. And then having moved his heart to request it because it is according to his will, God then undertakes for him in the spring that the drought and the consequent famine in Israel are in response to the fervent effectual prayers of this man of God.

This, of course, doesn't answer the question about why, you know, why would the Lord move Elijah to pray for this? You know, that drought is not a nice thing. The lack of rain and then the drought all dries up so there's no crops, there's no pasture for the beasts so they die for hunger and thirst and so on.

And all the birds of the air will be nothing for them to eat because there won't be any wee grubs in the ground because all the grass will be dried up and the fish will die because all the rivers and the brooks will dry up and so on.

So it's not a nice thing to happen. So why would you pray for this? Why pray for the withholding of life-giving water from heaven without which many surely will die, both of man and of beast?

[12 : 50] And everybody is going to suffer with it. So why would you pray for that? Well, remember that it is the Lord who gives the goodness of his creation, you know, that as Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, you know, that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his Son to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Both the giving of sunshine and the sending of the rain are gifts of God. What then is to happen when the God whose gifts they are is consistently rejected?

And this is what had been happening in the northern breakaway kingdom of Israel, which, remember, had broken away from Judah at the time of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, after the death of Solomon.

And all that had happened there, just to run down briefly for you, Jeroboam reigned for 22 years, his son Nadab for a further two years, then he was killed, and Bashar, one of his army generals or whatever, reigned for 24 years, his son reigned for two years, Elah, they were all slaughtered by Zimri, a rebel who himself was killed after reigning for all of seven days.

And then Omri, Ahab's father, reigned for 12 years, and then Ahab in the fullness of time reigned for 22 years. So by the time this famine or drought is happening, or that Elijah is praying for it, the breakaway kingdom of Israel, let's speculate and say that this is happening maybe 8 to 10 years into Ahab's reign, or halfway through, perhaps.

[14 : 31] We don't know exactly when it's happening. But by this time, Israel has been steeped in idolatry, if not outright paganism, for at least 70 years.

70 years of turning its back on the Lord. And within that context, we need to recognise that the present king, Ahab and his father, had taken it to a new low.

1 Kings 16, we read, verse 25, And then of Ahab, his son, we read, Ahab, the son of Omri, did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.

And it came to pass as if it had been a likely for him to walk in the sins of Jezebel, the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him.

And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove, and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

[15:44] So in other words, from being simply not very good, things in Israel had descended to new depths of outright paganism. How does paganism differ from idolatry?

Well, to an extent, they overlap. But you can have, for example, a certain amount of idolatry that purports to be worshipping the true God. For example, when Ahab made the golden calf at the foot of Mount Sinai, remember after he made them and said, Oh, these be thy gods which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.

Then Ahab said, Well, tomorrow is a feast to the Lord, to the God of Israel. And that's when the people, you know, the people that sang and danced and rose up to play and so on. It was all very pagan and very worldly.

But, at least outwardly, there was an attempt to direct it to being the worship of the true God, albeit in a completely God-dishonoring way.

Likewise, when they made the golden calves, plural, after northern Israel broke away, this is what is the sin of Jehoi, the son of Nebat, is that instead of the people going to Jerusalem to worship at the temple and worship the true God, the God of Israel, he set up calves in Dan and also in Bethel.

[17:04] He worshipped in Bethel. He sent the people away up north to Dan, in the very north of the country, as far away from Jerusalem as they could get. And he told them to worship these golden calves. He said, These are the gods that brought you out of Israel.

Now, the people would have in their minds, Okay, well, who was it that brought us out of Israel?

Okay, it was Jehovah. So, this must be somehow a way of worshipping the Lord, God, Jehovah.

Okay, this is what we've been told to do.

This is how we'll do it. We'll offer our sacrifices and we'll try and worship them this way and pray to the Lord at these places. It's idolatry, but you could persuade yourself that, at best, it was simply a wrong way of worshipping the true God.

God himself has said you not to make any graven images, of course. Now, as some of you know, we've just come back from South Uist and helping with the vacancy there and preaching there. And, of course, as many of you will know, along the sides of the roads, as you get further south into Uist, you'll find little shrines and little statues purporting to be of our Lord's mother, encased in glass and in a little house and so on.

A great big statue on the hillside and so on. And this, of course, is part and parcel of what some people use in their worship. Now, there's no way you can call that anything other than idolatry.

[18:22] And yet, of course, it purports to be our Lord's mother, sometimes holding a little baby child, which, again, purports to be our Lord himself that is being carried by his mother, by the Virgin Mary.

And although this is idolatry, you could say, but it's an attempt to worship the true God, to worship Jesus. And, okay, his mother's kind of there as well, perhaps more than she should be.

But, you know, it is Jesus' son that's there. It is idolatry. But it's kind of, at least it's trying to be sort of Christian. That's one thing. But then if somebody else were to come along and say, okay, we're going to smash all the shrines.

We're going to break down all the statues of Mary. And, you know, our purist Presbyterian might think, ah, good, at last, you know, we're getting rid of all the idolatry. And then say, and we're going to set up the worship of the gods of Egypt.

Or the gods of Greece. We're going to set up statues to Venus and Jupiter and to the Egyptian gods and goddesses. And we're going to get people to sacrifice goats and sheep and sometimes maybe their own children.

[19:26] And we're going to worship these gods instead. So we've moved instead from idolatry, which can purport to worship the true God, albeit very wrongly, into downright paganism, which is the worship of false gods.

Completely antagonistic to the true God. That's the difference between the other kings that went before, who were simply idolaters, and Ahab and his father, who became downright pagans.

And set up these false gods and worshipped them in a grove to Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And he did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger all the kings of Israel that were before him.

You see, somebody could, for example, have a Christian upbringing. They might have a Christian upbringing and they might turn their back on it. And they might go off to the world and be involved in all sorts of worldly and non-Christian activities.

And they might have no thought of the Lord. They just don't care. They're indifferent. And that's one thing. To be indifferent to what you know in your own background and have been brought up with as, you know, the worship of the true God.

[20 : 36] And you just couldn't really care less. You'd rather have the world and the flesh and the devil and so on. But it's just indifference. You just want your own thing, your own way. That's one thing. But to actively worship the devil or false gods, that's another thing altogether.

The one is worse than the other because the one is mere indifference. And the other is active enmity against the Lord. It's not just indifference.

It's actual enmity against the Lord. This is the state to which Israel had descended. And part of this response, by the Lord moving Elijah to pray for this, the whole country, the whole nation, the state, the kingdom, all the population, needed to see what happens if the living and true God should just tweak or adjust one little element of nature.

You see, the gods they would worship, they would include gods of fertility, gods of the fountains, gods of the rivers, gods of the field, gods of the seed and the harvest, gods of the skies, gods of the trees, and all these different gods they would have, which supposedly, if they worshipped them right, would give them fruitful harvests and abundance and plenty.

So they'd be burning their insects and making their sacrifices and saying their prayers to these false gods and they would be seen to be useless. Because for this three and a half years, two and a half to three years, there wouldn't be any rain coming out the sky.

[22 : 12] There wouldn't be any fruitfulness in the fields. There wouldn't be any fruitfulness in the sky.

Water without which nobody can live. Water which normally the Lord causes literally to drop down out of the sky. And this is one reason why we should never moan about the rain in our country. You know, we should never go, oh, it's wet again. Yeah, thank goodness we do get it. And the streams and burns replenish. And you see the waterfalls bubbling down the sides of the hills. Thank the Lord for the water.

Because without it you get drought. And then you get famine. And when the Lord adjusts, just tweaks one little element of creation.

This is what the world is reduced to. And all the false gods and idols of Ahab and Jezebel could do nothing about it. God moves Elijah to ask it.

[23 : 36] So that God may grant it. And even Ahab is compelled to recognize that without the servant of the one true God, the rain cannot be restored. We turn to chapter 18.

You know, we see at verse 10 where Obadiah, who's a God-fearer, you know, he says to Elijah, He says, As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom whether my Lord hath not sent to seek thee.

And when they said he is not there, he took an oath of that kingdom and nation that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, go tell thy Lord, behold, Elijah is here. Why would Ahab be looking for Elijah?

There is only one reason he could be looking for him. To capture him, to bring him back, and to compel him to pray to the Lord to open the skies and send the rain again.

And if he wouldn't do it willingly, no doubt to try and torture it out of him. Because there would be something in Ahab that would recognize, unless Elijah asks this, it's not going to happen.

[24 : 35] Because he has said, there's not going to be any rain these years except my word. And Ahab believes him. He believes that that is the truth. So he's gone looking for him. The Lord has taken Elijah away into the wilderness, to the brook Kenneth.

And he stays there for as long as it takes for all the search to die down. Then he takes him away up amongst the Sidonians. But not to the court of the king. You know, to Tyre and Sidon, where Jezebel herself came from.

The last place they would think of looking for him there. And so there he is fed and sustained and protected. And the Lord provides for him.

That Zarephath that belonged to Sidon, that's where Jezebel came from. She was the daughter of Ephraim, king of the Sidonians. Nobody's going to look for him there. And there the Lord sustained and kept him out of Ahab's reach.

So he couldn't get hold of Elijah. He couldn't ask for the rain to be turned back on. They just had to lump it. Until finally the Lord says, now go show yourself to Ahab.

[25 : 43] And I will send rain upon the earth. And until he does that, there is nobody for Ahab to get, to interrogate, to turn to.

They just have to put up with it. And the whole kingdom is made to see. Without the Lord and his life-giving involvement into the nation, everyone begins to die.

And it's as simple as that. Now, of course, we know from Prophet Amos, he talks about there being a famine in his day. Not a famine of food or drink, but a famine of hearing the words of the Lord.

And, of course, that is, in many ways, a real famine. If we don't have the Lord's provision for us, then we begin to perish spiritually and then eventually physically.

Amos 8, verse 11. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God. I will send a famine in the land. Not a famine of bread, nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And yet, there is the implication there that the two are interconnected.

[26 : 53] That the spiritual health of a nation is interconnected with its physical well-being and provision. This would again be implied in Isaiah 55.

And you might think, ah, come on.

That's talking about two different things. On the one hand, he's talking about creation and about the elements. And on the other hand, he's talking about the Bible and revealing his word. So, that's two different things. But the two are interconnected.

Just as creation and the word of the Lord are both means of revealing the Lord's presence and work and intention in the world. So, likewise, the individual, each individual person is both body and soul. And the two are interconnected. Although they can be distinguished and the soul will lead on even when the body has died. And the Lord will continue to be revealed even when the earth has passed away.

[28 : 18] But nevertheless, all creation, all heaven declares the glory of the living God. And the revealing of the Lord through the elements of creation.

And the revealing of the Lord through his written and spoken word are interconnected. They have the same purpose. To make the Lord known.

To reveal his work, his presence. And so, Elijah's prayer, which we're only told about in James, as we say. He's moved to pray that the Lord would withhold this one life-giving element.

And not to restore it until the Lord's own particular servant asks for it again. And so, the Lord withholds it. And whilst the Lord withholds that element, people die.

Beasts and animals starve. But they're already dying under paganism. You see, the physical death that everybody would wring their hands about and say, Oh, how terrible. Oh, how dreadful. What a tragedy.

[29 : 27] This is one thing. But the spiritual death is eternal. To which the kings of Israel were subjecting their people without a second thought. In much the same way as people would say, Oh, you know, what a gun crime or knife crime.

It kills so many people. Isn't that terrible? Nuclear weapons, you know. Oh, how many people would be killed if these were ever used? That may be true. But the slaughter of the unborn has killed 8 million souls since it was introduced 50 years ago.

Nobody turns a head of that. They celebrate on the streets of Dublin for the right now to kill their own children on their own soil. This is the depths to which these British Isles have descended.

And so much of the world. We have turned our backs upon the Lord. And the Lord, therefore, not surprisingly, withholds from us many of the blessings and benefits of life itself.

Life we may have in a physical sense. We may be able with food and drink and medicines to sustain physical life for a little bit longer and in a little bit better condition than maybe our forefathers.

[30 : 43] But my goodness, they knew more about life in a little bit better than our present generation does. The two are interconnected. As the Lord reveals himself through creation.

So likewise, through that creation and through his word, both spoken and written, there is the revealing, the revelation of the Lord.

And his people thus, as they walk more closely with him, which they needs must do out of sheer necessity or desperation, if nothing else.

Because we're not going to survive if we don't walk more closely with the Lord. Thus, as we come to know him more deeply. So likewise, we come to know more of his will.

And to ask him for that which he reveals to be his will. We can only ask for that which will honour the Lord.

[31 : 47] We're not just to ask, oh Lord, make me rich, make me famous, get me a Ferrari, or two Ferraris would be better. Give me a big house, give me lots of money in my bank account. And the Lord might just say, well why? What are you going to do with it?

How are you going to honour me with it? How am I going to benefit? How is my glory going to be increased by giving you all this junk? What do you plan to do with it? And if you plan to say, oh well, Lord, I actually plan to sell it all so I can give it all to the poor.

Well, that might be one reason to do it. But, is it ultimately for the Lord's glory that we seek it? Is it for his will? When David prays to the Lord in 2 Samuel chapter 7, when the Lord has revealed to him what he plans to do.

When David thinks he's going to build the Lord a house. And then the Lord says, well actually you're not going to. Your son will, but I will make you a house. We read that David says, and now, oh Lord, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and concerning his house.

Establish it forever and do as thou hast said. You see what David is praying, that God would do what he has already revealed to be his will.

[33 : 00] When the Lord lets us know what his will is and what will be in accordance with his will. It's never wrong for us to ask for that. Remember what John says, you know, if we, the confidence that we have in him that we ask anything according to his will, he hear of us.

And if we know that he hears whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him. And so it is what David, he says, now concerning the house, establish it forever. Do as thou hast said, for thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house.

Therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. When the Lord makes known to us what his will is.

And that doesn't just mean that we sit in our hands and say, okay, well until the Lord tells me what his will is. I don't know what it is. We are commanded to search the scriptures day by day. To read in them what his will is.

That that should be the food and drink of our souls. That we should be at prayer every day. We should be walking with the Lord in all our daily activities as well. And the more closely we walk with the Lord, the more we will come to drink in his truth.

[34 : 14] And his will is revealed in his truth. Just as he is revealed in creation, revealed more explicitly in his revealed word. And by his spirit.

The more we know of the Lord, the more we will know of his will. The more we will know what we should pray for as we ought. So we have in this passage here what we might call explicitly obedience and hidden prayer.

Because we are not told in 1 Kings what Elijah prays for or even that he does pray. But James tells us that he prayed.

And the Lord granted his prayer. And he prayed again. And the Lord granted that prayer as well. It is a hidden prayer. When Jesus was praying, he went away off into a mountain by himself alone. When he was giving advice to people as to how they should pray, he says, Go and shut yourself away in your own closet and shut out the world.

And your Father who seeth in secret will reward you openly. Hidden prayer nonetheless must be fervent prayer. And that prayer must be born out of obedience.

[35 : 28] And as we seek to obey the Lord and to follow his will and to keep his commandments, we will come to know that will more and more closely.

More and more deeply. And so the Lord will reveal to his servants not only what that will is, but what we should pray for as we ought.

The Spirit helping our infirmities. If ever there was a time when the Lord's people needed to do that, it is today. It is in this generation.

But we should not be overly discouraged because we should recognize that just as the Lord intervened, both by withholding the rain in Elijah's day and then destroying the prophets of Baal thereafter, that caused Israel to turn back to the Lord in the fear of his name.

He is able to do that again. There is nothing God is not able to do. That which we seek must be to do. That which we seek must be to his glory. That which we ask must be for the furtherance of his kingdom.

[36 : 35] But that which he reveals to be his will, he will move us to ask that he might grant our petition. The Lord who delights to answer the prayers of his children and to do as they ask.

If we walk in his will and seek that will and pray in accordance with what he reveals, we will know that we have the petitions that we ask him.

That he will reveal what he intends to do. That he will answer. That he will bless.