

## You don't have to be a superhero

RLSH - What is it, and what does it mean to you?

According to wikipedia there is a genuine phenomenon called RLSH (Real-life superhero's)

Real-life superheroes (RLSH) is a phenomenon where people dress up in costumes or masks in order to perform community service such as neighborhood watch or in some cases vigilantism. Early examples of this type of behavior are reported from the 1990s, e.g. with Mexico City's "Superbarrio" Gomez, who in 1997 donned red tights and a red and yellow wrestler's mask in order to organize labour rallies, protest, and file petitions to prevent families from being evicted



By Bernardo Bolaños - photo taken by Bernardo Bolaños, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1010117>

"Captain Australia", is based in the Queensland capital Brisbane. He wears a green suit and mask similar to Captain America with an @ symbol on his chest and a Batman styled utility belt. Police have expressed their preference that Captain Australia not intervene in incidents any more.

"Super Vaclav" is from the former Czechoslovakia. He purports to combat antisocial behavior of Prague citizens, by pouring buckets of water on individuals smoking near public transport stops. He also assaults dog owners with their own animal's poo if it is left behind on a lawn

The BBC reported on "Angle-Grinder Man", a British self-described "wheel-clamp superhero" who claims to use an angle grinder to illegally cut wheel clamps off vehicles which have been clamped in by police and parking officials in London. Police indicate that they have received no word or complaint of his actions

- In the Bible there are many that would make the RLSH list:

Jonah - Able to take a 3 day whale ride and live to talk about it.

Daniel - the Lion whisperer

The Three Hebrew boys - who dance in the flames

How about - Sampson - the Hulk has nothing on him.

Many would say Elijah was a superhero..He rode a tornado into glory, not to mention calling fire down from heaven.

But the truth is the Bible says that Elijah was an ordinary man, a man “with a nature” just like you and I.

Lets look at:

James 5:16 - 17 (NASB)

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. **The effective prayer of a righteous man** can accomplish much. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and **he prayed earnestly** that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. 18 **Then he prayed again**, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

## **1. The effective prayer of a righteous person**

The keyword and the one we get hung up on is “righteous”

So did Elijah cause it not to rain because of his goodness, and greatness?

Did Elijah cause it not to rain because he was a superhero/ superchristian?

No!

Let’s Look at what Elijah did:

Our scripture in the book of James is referring to the story of the showdown between God, and King Ahab, Jezebel, and the prophets of baal - through His prophet Elijah found in 1 Kings 17.

1 Kings 17:1(NASB)

1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”

**a. Elijah was righteous because he was led by the Spirit of God**

We are to be lead by the Spirit the same way.

Romans 8:14 ESV

14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Jesus said:

Matthew 4:19 (NASB)

19 And He \*said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Paul said:

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NASB)

1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

Jesus again said:

John 8:28 (NASB)

28 So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

So if we want to do what Elijah did we will have to allow the Holy Spirit to direct our prayer lives.

Turn back to James 5:16-17

**b. Elijah was righteous even though he had a nature like ours because He did not trust in his own righteousness**

Romans 3:10 (NASB)

10 as it is written,  
“THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

Righteousness does not come because we have ability.  
Righteousness comes by faith.

We could say that righteousness comes because we are willing to listen and do what God wants us to do.

Abraham is a good example of this, let’s look at what the Bible says in:

Genesis 15:6 (NASB)

6 Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Look at your neighbor and say “You ain’t no superhero!

## 2. Elijah prayed earnestly

Look at James 5:16-17

James 5:16-18 (NASB)

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and **he prayed earnestly** that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. 18 Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

### a. He was active in prayer

The words effective, and earnestly can cause us to feel that we must possess some special ability or we must work or sacrifice much.

Lets look at what these words mean:

**Effective NASB, Fervent AV,** g1754. **ἐνεργέω energeō**; from 1756; **to be active**, efficient:—

We might say available. Being available is to be actively engaged, you are not asleep, out of town, etc.

Elijah was active in prayer - He was conversing with the Lord

If we want to have power in prayer we need to be active. We have to do something! Now what we do compared to what God does is no comparison. But we do have to do something.

James 4:2b (NASB)

You do not have because you do not ask.

Matthew 7:7-11(NASB)

7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

Matthew 18:19-20 (NASB)

19 “Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. 20 For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”

### **(Earnestly) He found a place to pray**

Because of the problems that the nation of Israel was having under the rulership of Ahab Elijah prayed fervently. The english word fervently or earnestly gives us the feeling of exertion. But the greek word means:

**Earnestly NASB, Earnestly AV** g4335. προσευχή *proseuchē*; from 4336; prayer (worship); by implication, an oratory (chapel):— x pray earnestly, prayer. **A place of prayer - to pray on purpose**

or we might say:

Elijah found a place to pray

We are also admonished to have a **place to pray**

Matthew 6:6 (NASB)

6 But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

Jesus is our example and he demonstrates the importance of a place to pray when in Luke it says:

Luke 6:12 (NASB)

12 It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

### **3. Then he prayed again**

Look at James 5:16-17

James 5:16-18 (NASB)

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain,

and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. 18 **Then he prayed again**, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

Elijah was persistent (disciplined) in prayer...he kept doing it

Luke 18:1-8(NASB)

1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, 2 saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. 3 There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’ 4 For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, 5 yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’” 6 And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge \*said; 7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? 8 **I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?**”

God is not an unrighteous judge. He will answer you **quickly** if you will come boldly, in faith to Him.

## **Conclusion**

So what does this mean for us?

Are our times like the times of Elijah?

I would say so.

So what can we do? We can:

1. We can not try and do anything in our strength, or feel that we have to make something happen. Rather we can be lead by the Holy Spirit.
2. Trust the Lord, and obey Him and that obedience will be counted as righteousness.
3. We can be active in prayer. Not wish, hope, think about, complain. We can actually PRAY!
4. We can make ourselves a place to pray - a War room!

### **Altar Call**

Let's commit today to becoming what our name implies...That we are a House of Prayer.

If you have tried to pray but it is very difficult, We would like to pray with you.

If you have any other need, We would like to pray with you.

1/17/16 - Ellettsville House of Prayer - Sunday AM

1/24/16 - Harmony Road House of Prayer - Sunday AM

4/19/26 - Ellettsville House of Prayer - Sunday AM