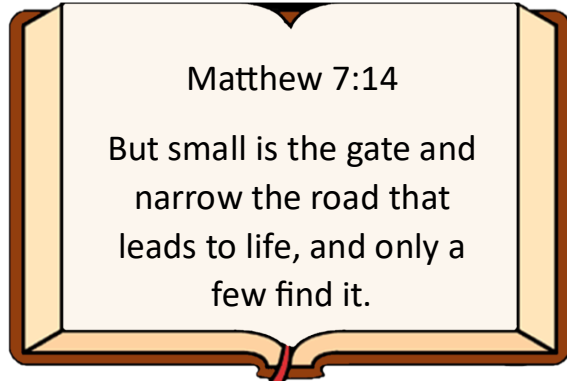


Weekly Memory Verse



What size is the gate that leads to life? _____

What type of road leads to life? _____

Elijah Challenges the Prophets of Baal



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Lesson Link

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God's Word through the prophet Elijah came true; there was no rain in the land of Israel for almost three years. As a result, there was a great famine (no food) and drought (no water) throughout the land. Many people and animals were dying because of the famine and drought, but God did take care of Elijah and the widow and her son during this time.

In the last year of the famine God spoke to Elijah and said, "Go speak to King Ahab and tell him I am going to send rain soon." Elijah obeyed God and immediately he headed for Samaria.

On the day of the meeting, King Ahab, the people, and all the prophets gathered on Mt. Carmel. There were many followers of Baal compared to Elijah, the one lone prophet of God. But Elijah boldly stood before all the people and challenged them, "How long is it going to take you to decide? If the Lord is really the true and living God, then follow Him; but if you believe Baal is God, then follow him." No Israelite came and stood beside Elijah. There was just silence.

Elijah continued speaking, "I am the only one of God's prophets here, but there are 450 of Baal's prophets. Today we will decide who is the only true and living God. We will get two bulls, one for each side, to offer as a sacrifice. Each of us will prepare the bull and place it on the wood of our altar. But we will not use any fire. Then each of us will call on the name of our god, and the god who answers by fire to burn up the sacrifice will be the one true God!" When the people heard the challenge, they all said, "Yes, this is a good idea. We agree. Let's do it!"

The prophets of Baal made their sacrifice first. They began to call on the name of Baal, shouting, "Oh Baal, answer us!" All morning long they cried out, and then they began to dance and leap around the altar. But nothing happened. The sacrifice was still on the altar.

Elijah began to tease them, saying, "Shout louder! Maybe your god is on a trip or too busy. Maybe he is sleeping and you must wake him up." And so, the prophets shouted even louder and cut their arms so that they bled, hoping Baal would answer. But by evening there was no answer—no fire came to burn up the sacrifice. He was not the real god; he was only a statue with no ears to hear.

Elijah said, "The one who answers prayer by _____ is the true God."

When it was Elijah's turn, he told the people to come and stand close to him. Elijah did something very unusual. He dug a large ditch around the altar. After Elijah arranged the wood on the altar, he cut the bull into pieces and laid them on top of the wood.

Then Elijah gave the strangest order of all to the people! "Fill four large barrels with water and pour it over the altar!"

He told them to pour the water over the altar two more times! They poured twelve barrels of them over the sacrifice. The water filled the ditch. Elijah wanted to make it so hard that only God could start it on fire. Then Elijah prayed to the living God. "Show everyone today that You are the God of Israel. Show them that I am Your servant and have done what You commanded me to do. Answer my prayer and show these people that You are God." Elijah prayed this prayer just once. He didn't spend hours begging God to answer, nor did he beat himself as the prophets of Baal had done.

Immediately God sent fire from heaven and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the soil, and dried up even the water in the ditch. The Israelites, the prophets of Baal, and the king could see for themselves that the true and living God was greater than any god, even Baal. God had used Elijah to show his people the power of the true and living God.

Then something very wonderful happened. When the people saw what God had done in answer to Elijah's prayer, they fell on their faces to the ground and cried out, and worshiped God.

Elijah then gave a command for the false prophets of Baal to be put to death. Then Elijah said to King Ahab, "Go and get something to eat. Celebrate! It is going to rain." Elijah believed that God was going to keep His promise to send the rain.

After everyone left, Elijah and his servant climbed to the top of Mt. Carmel, where Elijah bowed down with his face between his knees and prayed. The Bible tells us he prayed for the rain to come. Then he sent his servant to look for rain clouds seven times. On the seventh time the servant said, "A tiny cloud the size of a man's hand in the sky is coming from the direction of the sea."

Circle the correct answer.
Twelve barrels of (*tar, water, dirt*) were poured over Elijah's altar.