

Everyday FAITH Family Page

H2Oh!

Law/Gospel

False gods cannot and will not save because they do not exist. Those who put their trust in these false gods will always be disappointed. **The one true God answers the prayers of His people and acts on their behalf. He makes Himself known through His Son, Jesus, so that I will trust Him for all good things.**

Bible Words

[God says,] "Call to Me and I will answer you."
Jeremiah 33:3

The Big Picture

- When husbands died, widows in biblical times often experienced poverty and debt. Those with children to help work the family land fared better.
- People easily identified widows, so scholars think they wore something to signal status.
- Land in Israel was strongly tied to tribal land rights. Widows held family land in trust until sons became of age or daughters married within the tribe.
- If the widow was childless, the law required the closest male relative of the widow's spouse to marry her and provide an heir for her husband's land. This was called levirate marriage.

Fire and H2Oh! Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18:20–46

During the great drought, Queen Jezebel killed as many of the Lord's prophets as she could find. God sent Elijah to live with a widow in the country of Sidon. God provided the household with bottomless containers of oil and flour.

Soon afterward, Elijah challenged Ahab, 450 prophets of Baal, and 400 prophets of Asherah to meet on Mount Carmel. Baal's prophets arrived, but the Asherah prophets stayed away.

As many Israelites watched, Elijah proposed the false prophets sacrifice a bull on an altar and pray for their god to light it with fire. Elijah would do the same. Forced to agree or appear weak, the prophets got to work, crying out to Baal from morning to sunset. They cut themselves and limped to get Baal's attention. Elijah mocked their efforts, saying Baal must be thinking, going to the bathroom, traveling, or asleep. Baal did not answer. Obviously, he was a sham.

Late in the day, Elijah finally acted. He built an altar with twelve stones, one for each of Israel's twelve tribes. He slaughtered the bull and placed it on the altar. He dug a trench around the altar and ordered the entire area soaked with water three times. Then Elijah said a short prayer, asking the Lord to show the people that He is the one true God.

Fire from the Lord consumed the burnt offering, wood, stones, and dust. It licked up the water in the trench. Seeing this, the people fell on their faces and confessed the Lord as the true God. Soon after, a great rainstorm relieved the dreaded drought.

Getting Our God's Attention

The Baal prophets cut themselves to get their god's attention, but we do not need theatrics to compel our God. Our Lord promises to hear and answer our prayer. He cares for us, gives all good gifts, and protects us. Even more, Jesus shed His blood so that we might receive eternal life and the forgiveness of sins. Through Him, God makes us His children in Baptism, where we die, are buried, and rise to new life in Christ.

Prayer

Lord, give us faith in Christ Jesus, our Savior. Hear us, dear Lord, and answer our prayers in Jesus' name. Amen.

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