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41 Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for *there is* the sound of abundance of rain." 42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, 43 and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." So he went up and looked, and said, "*There is* nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again." 44 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!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare *your chariot*, and go down before the rain stops you.' " 45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. 46 Then the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.  
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#### 1. Rain cometh

- a. God ended the drought after 3 years
  - a1. Neither Ahab nor Israel had repented
  - a2. God had limited the chastisement perhaps for the sake of the elect or by mercy
- b. The judgment ends with the contest on Mt. Carmel
  - a1. God brings fire down from heaven, but Baal did not do so
  - a2. Out of fear, the people acknowledge that the Lord is God
  - a3. Elijah has the 450 prophets of Baal (+ 400 prophets of Asherah) executed
- c. Elijah tells Ahab to eat & drink because rain comes
  - a1. A very mundane response to fire from heaven & execution of hundreds of priests
  - a2. Even though Ahab opposes God, he is not executed, but is still treated as king
    - b1. God determines the time of death
    - b2. Ahab must decide in the face of great evidence whether to repent
  - a3. Ahab responds by eating his meal

- b1. There is no indication that he is reflective on what he has seen
- b2. Ahab seems unmoved by events

#### 2. Rain by sevens

- a. Unlike the fire from heaven, there is no response after Elijah's first prayer
  - a1. Jm. 5 is this a test of faith or a mode of God
  - a2. Not all acts of God follow the same pattern
- b. After 7 times, finally a cloud the size of a man's hand rose from the sea
  - a1. An indication that rain was forming
  - a2. The natural formation of storms is from evaporation out of the ocean & seas
  - a3. 7 times is often the number of completion (7 days of creation, 7 candles on the Menorah, Saul was to wait 7 days until Samuel came to make a sacrifice, 7 churches of Revelation...)
- c. Elijah did not quit praying until his prayers were answered (fervency of prayer mentioned in Jm. 5)
  - a1. Since God led Elijah to pray for the end of the drought, God would answer
  - a2. The prayer exercise is important in itself
  - a3. There is a communing with God in pray

#### 3. Olympic prophet

- a. Elijah warns Ahab to hurry back to the palace
  - a1. God is still working on Ahab
  - a2. Ahab mounts his chariot & races back to the safety of his palace
- b. The torrential rains will run off the hard ground in torrents, creating streams in ponds as it drains
  - a1. Soon the roads will flood & then deteriorate into mud quagmires
  - a2. The drought ends in widespread flooding
- c. Elijah *girds up his loins* (ties up his robe to run)
  - a1. God moved Elijah along so he outraced Ahab's chariot (superhuman feat)
  - a2. God again demonstrates his power