

## **Children's Story: Discipline to Win Gold**

Michael Phelps is the Olympic athlete who has won more gold medals than any other athlete—23 of them! The most Olympic gold medals any other athlete has won is nine.

But for Michael to win the gold he had to have **discipline**. He would practice about four hours a day six days a week. That's what made him one of the best swimmers in the entire history of the Olympic Games.

Michael had to train for a long time before he was ready to compete in the Olympics. He started swimming at the age of seven, but he didn't qualify to compete in the Olympics until he was 15 and he didn't start winning medals until four years after that. What would you be willing to work on for 12 years?

But it wasn't just how long he had to work, it was how hard. His workout was intense, and his diet was pretty extreme, but if you're going to aim for becoming the best of the best, then you're going to have to push yourself further than the rest.

Michael would start with a warm-up so complicated and intense that he divided it into four sections, each with three to six different types of swimming in it. All of that would be a whole workout for most people, but Michael would just be getting started. The main workout he divided into two sections. The first section had nine exercises and the second section had 15! On top of all that, he would also spend time weightlifting. Imagine doing all of that each day, six days a week! That's a lot of discipline!

Dear children, if we want to win the gold medal in our walk with Jesus, we are going to have to have discipline to say no to things that are harmful to us and practice daily the things that good for us. Today we are going to study the lifestyle of those who took the Nazirite vow. We will see how dedicated and disciplined they were to be able to fulfill their promise to God.