

“Give It Your Best Shot”

2 Kings 13:14-19

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Scripture

14 Now when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to die, King Joash of Israel went down to him and wept before him, crying, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” **15** Elisha said to him, “Take a bow and arrows,” so he took a bow and arrows. **16** Then he said to the king of Israel, “Draw the bow,” and he drew it. Elisha laid his hands on the king’s hands. **17** Then he said, “Open the window eastward,” and he opened it. Elisha said, “Shoot,” and he shot. Then he said, “The Lord’s arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram! For you shall fight the Arameans in Aphek until you have made an end of them.” **18** He continued, “Take the arrows,” and he took them. He said to the king of Israel, “Strike the ground with them”; he struck three times and stopped. **19** Then the man of God was angry with him and said, “You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck down Aram until you had made an end of it, but now you will strike down Aram only three times.”

Summary

How do you handle life’s transitions? Are you up for the challenge presented by change? Can you manage your mind and your emotions through life’s inevitable inflection points? Often the quality and the character of our lives depend on how we handle transitions. We find Elisha at a significant point of transition (on his deathbed) giving counsel to King Joash who views Elisha as a father-figure. Looking beyond his current inflection point and into the future, Elisha emphasizes that King Joash give his best efforts when launching his arrows. Elisha has his eyes fixed on the future because he knows that the future is as great as the promises of God. That God is not through with the nation, that even though he (Elisha) is passing, God is not passing. God is not dead. And if God is not dead, God is not through dealing with us

The future belongs to God. You belong to God. Your children belong to God. EVERYTHING belongs to God - the whole world, and he’s got the whole world in his hands. Give it all you got and leave the outcome to God. But don’t go half-steppin’. Give it all you’ve got and see if God won’t do exceedingly, abundantly and above anything you could ever ask or imagine.

Like King Joash, we are challenged to give it all we’ve got and leave the rest to God. Some of us are afraid to give maximum effort and trust God to do the rest. However, we should remember to not let the arrows go without drawing the bow back all the way. God wants us to shoot our best shot.

Sermon Points

1. **Gain Strength from the Setbacks:** The strength of the arrow is in the setback. You don't know how far you can go until you have a setback. Folks will see us in our glory and not know our story. They don't know about the setbacks we had to go through to get where we are. Don't sweat the setbacks. Setbacks are the prologues that push us into the next chapters of our lives.
2. **Guided By the Source of Our Strength:** We need more than our gifts, regardless of how many we have been given. The ultimate gift is grace. We all need somebody to put their hand on our hand and we need to know that their hand is in the one who stilled the waters so we can shot our best shot.
3. **Go Even When You're Not Sure You Have a Shot:** Joash shot three times and he gets something done, but he doesn't get as much as he could have gotten done. He wasn't a total failure; just fell short of his potential. We don't want to get to the end of our lives only doing half of what we could have done. Pour it all out to God and let him do more than you could ever ask or imagine. Trust in the Lord with all of your mind, soul and strength and watch God send an arrow into the future that will not only bless you but it will bless your children from everlasting to everlasting.

Discussion Questions

1. What lessons have you learned at your lowest of lows?
2. Describe a time when you gained strength from a setback?
3. Share an experience when you poured it all out to God. What happened as a result?
4. What shot are you scared to take that God is calling you to take?
5. When has God propelled your work further than you imagined?