



11 / 4 / 2012 // GROUP DISCUSSION FROM THE CURRENT TEACHING SERIES ... HEADLINES

START

Take a moment, go around the circle and introduce yourself. Each person needs to answer this question:

What is the worst job you ever had? Share why it was such a horrible job?

SHARE

We are now starting a new Series called "Headlines," in which we are going to take a look at some amazing stories from God's word. These stories are amazing, because they actually happened and if we were alive in those days, these stories would have made some big headlines in the local paper. We have all had times in our lives where the odds were stacked against us, maybe none more than Elisha and his assistant. Read 2 Kings 6:8-23 and we will look at a few key verses:

Two Men Take Down an Army // 2 Kings 6:15-17

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike this army with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked.

How do you personally respond when under stress, anxiety or fear?

In what ways do you see God's power working throughout the story?

Faith reveals that God is doing more than we can ever realize by human sight. How do you think each character in this story was affected by these events? (Elisha, Elisha's Assistant, King Aram, The King of Israel, The Aramean Army)

GROW

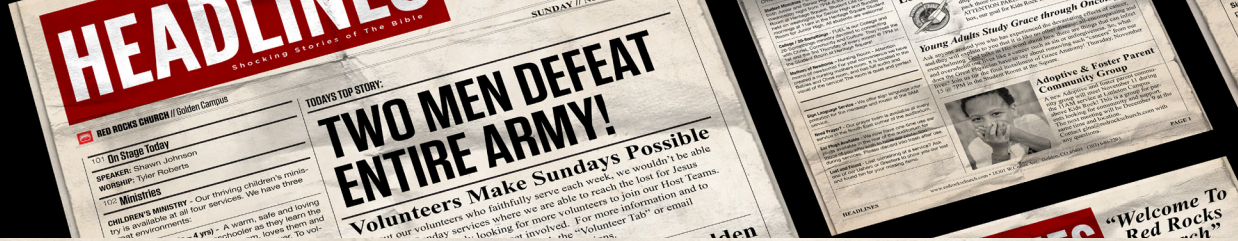
Throughout the message, we learned that God's power is at work, even when we don't realize it. King David was not sitting on his throne when he wrote this Psalm. He was running for his life from his own son Absalom. Some scholars think there were as many as 10,000 soldiers surrounding David. Even when circumstances are stacked against us, that doesn't mean that God is without a plan even in the most dire situations:

Trusting God // Psalm 3:1-6

LORD, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me!
Many are saying of me, "God will not deliver him."
But you, LORD, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high.
I call out to the LORD, and he answers me from his holy mountain.
I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.
I will not fear though tens of thousands assail me on every side.

This psalm consists of David's lament when his son, Absalom, attempted to overthrow him. While his troubles were monumental, David found peace and strength in the Lord. Steven J. Lawson says of this psalm: 'It is a hymn of individual lament, written to paint a clear picture of what triumphant faith looks like when it is tested by the fires of adversity.'

This is the first psalm in which we find the word 'Selah'. This term comes to us from the world of music. When a composer put 'Selah' into his music, he was calling for a rest, a pause or a hush. Every musician knows the importance of this. A conductor stands before an orchestra or choir with a baton in his hand. With that baton he can call from that orchestra or choir a thunderous burst or dead silence. When he calls for the latter, the whole composition takes on special meaning. (Ellsworth, R. (2006). *Opening up Psalms*. Opening Up Commentary (64-65). Leominster: Day One Publications.)



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When David wrote this, he added a 'forced hush' or 'Selah.' Why do you think that is important for us to understand?

Has there been a difficult time for you where God seemed to allow a 'forced hush' in your life? What did you learn through that?

Think about the thing you fear most right now. What do you think God might be saying to you after reading this?

MOVE

Not everything we see or hear tells the whole story. Even though Elisha's assistant had eyes, he didn't see the full picture until God opened his eyes to see it. While Elisha was about to be attacked by an entire army, he was well aware that God's army was stronger and ready to defend him. It is important that we believe what the truth of God's word says to us. We must guard our thinking and not allow the enemy to steal our joy and make us fearful. Here is a great quote from Lisa Chan from a recent conference where she said, "Don't believe everything you think," meaning that just because you think something doesn't mean it is true, we need to take captive our thoughts and make sure they line up with what God says about us:

Think about such things // Phil 4:8-9

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Why is Paul reminding us about the importance of their thought life?

What negative thoughts do you allow yourself to think about? How can we pray for you in this area?

PRAY

Let's put into practice what we have been learning by praying for each other. Let's specifically pray for each other in the area of our thought life and ask God to help us see things clearly this week.