

**"The Floating Axe Head"**

**2 Kings 6:1-7**

**Introduction:** Tonight, in our study of Elisha and his miracles we have come to a very familiar passage. The passage before us deals with the Floating Axe Head. There are many practical lessons within these 7 verses for our lives, so we shall slowly work our way through and gather all we can. Now this miracle seems so trivial compared to the healing of Naaman, but I am reminded of what Paul wrote to Timothy.

**2 Timothy 3:16**

*<sup>16</sup> All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

*<sup>17</sup> That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

I. **The Need**

**Notice 2 Kings 6:1**

When I read this first verse of chapter 6 I am truly encouraged when I stop and consider the background. Elisha was a teacher to young men who were desiring to learn about the Lord. These men would have been prophets in training. There were several schools where Elisha taught and this one here in 2 Kings 6 was growing and as we come to this chapter we see that they are out of room.

Now let me remind you of something that we talked about when we started this study. Israel was at this time in a very dark period. Idolatry was rampant and much of Israel had drifted away from God. Remember the situation in Bethel?

**1 Kings 2:23-24**

*<sup>23</sup> And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.*

*<sup>24</sup> And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.*

These little children reflected the attitudes of their parents. When they encouraged Elisha to "GO UP" they were basically saying they wanted him to leave just like his teacher Elijah did. In other words, the people had no desire for a prophet which meant they wanted nothing to do with God or His messages and His messengers.

So, in the midst of this spiritual darkness this school of prophets was growing. Od was still at work within a remnant of Hid people.

**Application:**

This is such an encouragement for you and me today. We live in a society where we are seeing a constant digression of spirituality. Churches are closing and many of those who are still functioning are reducing the number of services for the week. The day that used to be set aside out of reverence for God is now like any other day. That is Sunday by the way. So, we are seeing a greater influence of darkness in our day.

But God is still at work. Let me remind you of the words of Jesus.

**Matthew 16:15-18**

*<sup>15</sup> He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?*

*<sup>16</sup> And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

*<sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*

*<sup>18</sup> And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

No matter how great the darkness God is still at work and He will always have a remnant of people who will be faithful in the midst of a decaying society. We often get concerned about what is going to happen 15 or 20 years from now. We certainly do not know how dark this society will be, but we can be sure that God will still be working and calling out a bride for His Son if the rapture does not happen.

II. **The Answer**

**Notice 2 Kings 6:2-3**

The young prophets took their need before Elisha and ask his permission to go to the Jordan River where there must have been a large number of trees and there cut the lumber they needed to build a new school. Elisha gave his approval and then one of the students turn back to Elisha and requested his presence in the building process to which he agreed to go.

The reason why they ask Elisha was not because he was a master builder. They ask him because of his position with God. These young prophets asked Elisha because they desired the presence and the blessings of God in this project. These men were thinking like the Psalmist in Psalm 127.

**Psalm 127:1**

*Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

They knew that if the school and the building project were going to be successful God had to be in it and He had to oversee the project. They desired the presence of the Almighty God with them. They anticipated there would be challenges and there would be problems and for that reason they wanted Elisha with them because in him they saw a connection to God.

**Application:**

These men are a great example for you and me. As believers we must be sure that in all we do that God is in it. We must be sure that as we live our lives in the midst of this world that is under the curse that we are living in the will of God so as to have His blessing on all we do. We can be sure there will be problems and there will be trials and tribulations even in the will of God.

**Job 14:1-2**

*Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.*

*<sup>2</sup> He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.*

**James 1:2-5**

*<sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

*<sup>3</sup> Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

*<sup>4</sup> But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

*<sup>5</sup> If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

James tells us there will be tribulations and there will be times when we do not have the wisdom to make the proper choices. All of this happens in the will of God and therefore we must be sure that we walk in His will for we will certainly need His wisdom. To live out of His will is to live in broken fellowship with God. Let us notice what the Lord said to Israel through Isaiah pertaining to the sin they were living in.

**Isaiah 1:15-20**

*<sup>15</sup> And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, **I will not hear**: your hands are full of blood.*

*<sup>16</sup> Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;*

*<sup>17</sup> Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.*

*<sup>18</sup> Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*

*<sup>19</sup> **If ye be willing and obedient**, ye shall eat the good of the land:*

*<sup>20</sup> But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.*

Outside the will of God, we should not expect the blessings of the Lord.

### **1 John 5:14-15**

*<sup>14</sup> And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:*

*<sup>15</sup> And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*

### **III. The Problem**

#### **Notice 2 Kings 6:4-5**

As the students began to cut down the trees for the lumber one of them had the axe head come loose and it fell into the river. The very first thing this young man did was he turned to Elisha and he voiced his concern that it had been borrowed so it was not even his own. To you and me this would be no problem for we would jump in the car and drive to the hardware and purchase a new one. But it was not that easy for these young prophets.

Notice the words of Dillard:

*"We usually date the beginning of the iron age to 1200 BC and for a time Israel fell behind her neighbors in developing the technology to exploit this metal. So, iron implements in Elisha day would have been very expensive. Losing a borrowed axe head would be comparable to wrecking a borrowed car."*

Some teachers have stated that this man was being careless and that is why he lost the axe head, but we have nothing to back that thought. I heard one man question the concern of the man whom this axe head was borrowed from. He wanted to know why someone would lend out an axe with a loose head.

He went on to say that often when it comes to giving to people in the ministry people give that which is worn out or more than used.

I was told a true story by Brother Hap one time about a family who saved all their tea bags when they heard a missionary was coming to the church. They then bagged all their USED tea bags and gave them to the family. They thought they were making a great sacrifice because the bags had only been used once.

We cannot be sure if the man whom the axe head was borrowed from knew of the loose head, so we cannot go too far with that thought. But there is something here that we can learn from and that is the fact that the man who lost the axe head immediately turned to Elisha with the problem.

**Application:**

Where do you turn when you are faced with a situation which is out of your control? We should immediately turn to the Lord. He desires for us to seek Him in every situation. Notice what the Psalmist recorded;

**Psalm 46:1-3**

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

*<sup>2</sup> Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;*

*<sup>3</sup> Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.*

The Psalmist knew that God was right by his side and waiting to help. Let me show you something that happened to the disciples and explain what it means to us.

**Matthew 14:22-31**

*<sup>22</sup> And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.*

*<sup>23</sup> And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.*

<sup>24</sup> *But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.*

<sup>25</sup> *And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.*

<sup>26</sup> *And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.*

<sup>27</sup> *But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*

<sup>28</sup> *And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.*

<sup>29</sup> *And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.*

<sup>30</sup> *But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.*

<sup>31</sup> *And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*

Peter was able to walk on the water but when he took his eyes off of the Lord and began to look at the storm he began to sink. But the moment he called out to the Lord Jesus reached out His hand and caught him.

There are going to be storms in our lives and sometimes it is the will of God that we enter into and go through the storms. In those times it is so important that we keep our eyes on the Lord because when we begin to look at the storm/the situation around us we begin to sink. But even then, it is a blessing to know that Jesus is right there waiting for us to call upon Him.

#### IV. The Miracle

##### Notice 2 Kings 6:6-7

Elisha performed a miracle by making the axe head float. There are multiple ways to look at this miracle.

#### V. The Picture

##### 1. This can be seen as a picture of our salvation.

The axe head represents man and our fall in Adam. In Adam we experienced a fall when he took that which was not intended for him which was the forbidden fruit. The Jordan River

is a picture of death and so when the axe head fell into the river it pictures what happened to all mankind because we were in Adam and that is we died spiritually. The "stick" which can be translated "tree" represents the cross and how God used the death of His Son on the cross to lift us from death and placed us in the body of Christ where we have life.

**Romans 5:18**

*<sup>18</sup> Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*

2. **This can be seen as how the believer may have lost blessings restored.**
  - a. Pour out your heart to the Lord about the loss of the blessing in your life.
  - b. Let the question, "Where fell it?" take you back to where the blessing was lost. Search your past and see what the cause of the lost blessing was and then confess it to the Lord. Repent if repentance is needed.
  - c. Make use of the means of recovery. Plead the merits of the cross.
  - d. Stretch forth the hand of faith. Count on God's grace to restore the lost blessing.

**Conclusion:**

There are many believers walking about believing the lies of Satan when he tells them the lost blessings can never be recovered. Maybe you have lost your joy, maybe your love for the Lord has grown cold, maybe your appetite for spiritual things has faded away, or maybe you are just spiritually stagnant. Just as the axe head was retrieved in the same way God desires to restore whatever the lost blessings might be, but we must look back to where it was lost and judge ourselves and confess our sin to see the restoration.