

# The Floating Ax Head

2 Kings 6:1-7

## MEMORY VERSE

2 KINGS 6:5

“But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron ax head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, ‘Alas, master! For it was borrowed.’”

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A long piece of yarn or string (long enough to stretch across your room), masking tape, a small beanbag and a whistle.

Graham crackers, broken into squares (5 squares for each child), cake frosting in a can, tongue depressors and paper plates.

Gray and brown construction paper, scissors, glue and markers.

Balloons, small strips of paper, ribbon or string, markers and a pin.

## ATTENTION GRABBER!

### Beanbag Volley

For this game you will need a long piece of yarn or string, masking tape, a small beanbag and a whistle. In today’s lesson we are going to learn how that the Lord is concerned about everything in our lives - even the little things. Use this game to get the children to think of ways that the Lord has answered prayer in their own family’s lives.

Form two teams. Have them go to opposite sides of the room. Use a string (or yarn) long enough to go across the room. Tape the ends of the string to the wall on either side of the room. Have the string be at least 1 foot above the children’s head. On the board write “Team 1” and “Team 2.”

When you say, “go” toss the beanbag to one of the children. They need to give one example of how the Lord has answered a prayer for them. If they do, their team gets one point. If they have a hard time answering, allow another child from their team to give an example. Keep it timed though, (maybe 15 - 30 seconds per answer). If the team can’t answer then the other team receives the point. After they have answered the child will then toss the beanbag over the string for a child to catch on the other team. Keep repeating until everyone has had a turn to catch the beanbag and share how the Lord has answered a prayer. Declare a winning team, but have the children clap and cheer for one another.

## **LESSON TIME!**

In our lesson today, we will see another miracle that God does through the prophet Elisha. Much of his recorded life is about the miracles that he does. These verses also talk about Elisha and “the sons of the prophets” and their special relationship with one another.

It seems that Elisha devoted much of his time and attention to the training of the young prophets. There was one group at Bethel, another at Jericho (2 Kings 2:3,4), and another at Gilgal (4:38). It was very important to Elisha that he teach and train the next generation of preachers and leaders in the ways of the Lord.

Something happens to one of the students in our story today. It is something that some of us may not think is a very big deal. But to the prophet it was. We are going to learn about how important it is to respect other people’s property when we borrow something. But we are also going to learn that God cares about the things that we care about. **God cares about the things that concern us.**

## 2 KINGS 6:1-3

And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us.

"Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell." So he answered, "Go."

Then one said, "Please consent to go with your servants." And he answered, "I will go."

In verse one, we see that this school appears to be where Elisha lived. The student says, "Where we dwell with you". Elisha may have lived with the students as he taught them and worked with them. On this occasion they point out to Elisha that their dwelling place was now too small for all of the people there to live.

What a joy to Elisha that the school was growing to the point of overcrowding. People love and need the word of God, and true believers will draw thirsty souls to be quenched with the living water. We see the humility of the students, for they did not take matters into their own hands, but they respectfully brought the problem before their leader Elisha. **God cares about the things that concern us.**

Their humble hearts are also seen in their desire to go and get wooden beams for their new building. They were also willing to go and do the work themselves. Do you remember when Elisha was first called by Elijah? He was working hard in his father's field. A man with a good work ethic passes it onto his students.

Matthew Henry says, "They were humble men who did not affect that which was great. They did not speak of sending for cedars and marble stones and curious artificers, but only of getting every man a beam to run up a plain hut or cottage.

Elisha's response shows forth his humility; he simply says, "Go." He saw that their request was a valid one, and agreed with them. Proud leaders quickly resent any suggestions that come from those under their care. Elisha teaches us a very practical lesson here: leaders should never consider themselves above receiving ideas from those for whom they care. Proverbs 1:7b tells us "...fools despise wisdom and instruction." **God cares about the things that concern us.**

Because of Elisha's meekness, graciousness and wisdom they desired him to go along with them. They did not tire of his company, nor of his instruction. Elisha did not tire of them, for he went with them down to the Jordan.

What a great heart Elisha had towards these young prophets. In the New Testament it is kind of like the relationship that Paul had with Timothy. Paul called Timothy his "son in the faith." While we are young, God is faithful to give us role models to look up to. Men and women who have served the Lord for a long time and are willing to help us to grow in our relationship with the Lord.

## **A Home For The Prophets**

Use this edible craft as an illustration for the story and for snack! You will need graham crackers, broken into squares (5 squares for each child), cake frosting in a can, tongue depressors and paper plates. In tonight's lesson we saw how the prophets needed a bigger home. We are going to get to build our own home for the prophets, but the fun part is that after the story we will get to eat it!

Give each child 5 graham cracker squares and a tongue depressor. Have them spread the frosting with the tongue depressor on the two edges of the graham crackers to make the four walls. Then have them make a roof by placing the remaining section on the top. Remember to have the children go LIGHT on the frosting! For

an added variation, they can try to break out or cut doors and windows in the squares.

Have the children set aside their graham cracker houses to take home with them when their parents pick them up.

**2 KINGS 6:4-7**

**So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees.**

**But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron ax head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Alas, master! For it was borrowed."**

**So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And he showed him the place. So he cut off a stick, and threw it in there; and he made the iron float.**

**Therefore he said, "Pick it up for yourself." So he reached out his hand and took it.**

In the next verse we see that they went to the Jordan and began to “cut down wood.” Again we see their work ethic, for they did not expect anyone else to do the work for them, they did it themselves. They did not hold “their call from God” over others, but allowed humility and meekness to direct them.

As they are busy working an accident seems to have happened. The ax head fell into the water. But was it an accident? The dictionary says that an accident is “when some effect is produced or some consequence issues from an action undesigned by its performer.” From God’s point of view, nothing happens in this world but what God is aware of; but from the human side, a lot of things result from our actions, which were not intended to happen.  
**God cares about the things that concern us.**

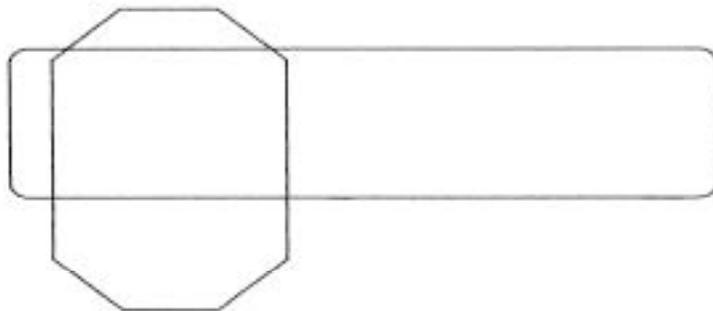
The man cries “Alas, master!” speaking to Elisha. He went immediately to him, not thinking him too high to approach, but being the one to run to in trouble. It seems the man thought that the ax head was lost forever, with no hope of it ever being retrieved.

This is a beautiful picture of how we are to come to our Master, Jesus, when we are in trouble, even though we think all is lost. We see his concern for the property of another person, for it was not his own ax, but another person’s. It is always important for us to value other people’s property higher than our own. “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” (Philippians 2:4)

## Ax Craft

Using gray and brown construction paper make an ax. You will need construction paper, scissors, glue and markers. See the example below. Have the children cut out the ax head in gray construction paper and the handle in brown construction paper.

Glue the ax head to the handle. Write the memory verse reference and/or theme onto the ax head for the children to take home and remember.



Now we will see the Lord do another miracle through Elisha. Elisha could do nothing of himself apart from God. It is God who does

the miracle, not the man. **God cares about the things that concern us.**

When he put the stick into the water, the iron head of the ax floated up to the top. Have you ever tried to make iron float? Iron is a very heavy metal, and it does not float; it sinks! Did Elisha make it float? No, it was Almighty God who did. God is never bound to the laws of gravity, or any other law of nature.

What a joy and awe there must have been in the man's heart as he was handed back the ax head he thought was lost. What seemed to be a bad accident turned out to bring God glory! "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Have you ever had anything happen in your life that seemed to be a disaster, but God worked it out for good in your life? God delights in doing those kinds of things. Are we to worry and fret about them when they do happen? Philippians 4:6,7 tells us, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." **God cares about the things that concern us.**

It is interesting that God chose to help this man in a very difficult situation. God wants to help us to. He cares about things that may seem to be "little" but are big in our eyes. We need to be responsible with what others let us use, but at the same time we also need to trust the Lord to help us out when "accidents" happen. **God cares about the things that concern us.**

This is also a good picture of how God can raise up a hard, iron heart. If he can raise an iron ax head then certainly he can change a hard, iron heart. Matthew Henry says, "God's grace can thus raise the stony, iron heart which has sunk into the mud of this world,

and raise up affections naturally earthly, to things above.” If He can rise up an iron ax head, He can change the hardest of hearts to call upon the Master for help.

## Thankful Balloons

You will need balloons, small strips of paper, ribbon or string, markers and a pin. Write out the following verses about thankfulness on small sheets of paper. Do enough for each child in your class.

1. 2 Corinthians 9:15
2. 1 Thessalonians 5:18
3. 1 Corinthians 15:57
4. Ephesians 5:20
5. Philippians 4:6
6. Psalm 107:1

Insert the small strip of paper into the balloons. Blow up the balloons and tie with a ribbon. Place the balloons around the room. Have the children sit in a semi-circle. Call on one child to select a balloon. Ask the student to think of something to thank God for. After the response, have the child break the balloon with the pin and read the enclosed verse. Continue until all the balloons have been broken.

Variations: You can either insert the papers into the balloons and blow them up before class, or allow the children to do it in class. For younger children you may want to use only one balloon, the popping might frighten some children. You can place all of the strips of paper into the one balloon, pop the balloon and allow the children to get a scripture. Help them to read the verses on thankfulness.

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord that He cares about all of the things that concern us. Even if others don't think that they are as important as we do. We can bring all of our cares and concerns to the Lord. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.