

# 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 will learn 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 cannot answer then the other team receives the point. After they have answered, the child will 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!

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.

Today, one of Elisha’s student prophets has a mishap—one perhaps that we would view as a little thing—but to the prophet, it was a big concern. Big or small, God is concerned about the things that concern His children. **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."

It appears Elisha may have lived with the students as he taught them and worked with them. The school had grown and become too crowded. The students respectfully sought Elisha's consent to build another dwelling.

Proud leaders resent any suggestions that come from those under their care. Elisha demonstrates his humility in his quick consent to the students, "Go." Leaders should never consider themselves above receiving ideas from others. Proverbs 1:7b tells us, "...fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Elisha's students desired their teacher to accompany them. Elisha must have had a great relationship with these young prophets. Perhaps it was like the relationship that Paul, of the New Testament, 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--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. You may want to remind the children to 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.

As the young prophets were busy working, one dropped an iron ax head into the water. The man cried, "Alas, master!" addressing Elisha. It seemed the young man brought his concern immediately to his master, Elisha. The readiness with which he approached Elisha showed a pretty good master-student relationship. Our relationship with our loving heavenly Father should reflect a great relationship. When trouble comes, we should feel confident of God's concern and quick to "cast our cares upon Him." **God cares about the things that concern us.**

Note, the young prophet's concern for the property of another person: he was very aware it was not his own ax, but another person's. It is important for us to value other people's property higher than our own. "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." (Philippians 2:4)

God performed another miracle through the hand of Elisha! When Elisha 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! 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 retrieved the ax head he thought was lost for good. 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 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 helping His children in impossible circumstances.

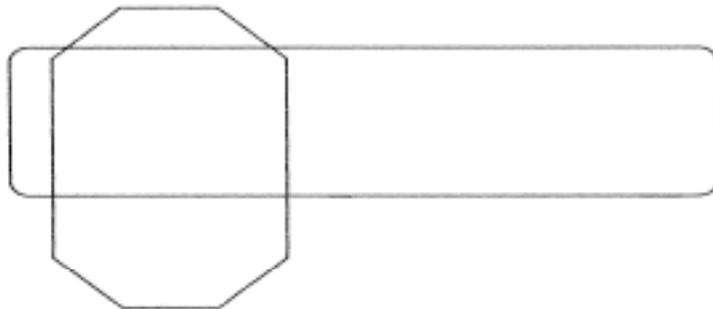
Remember, as the young prophet quickly brought his concerns to his mentor, so we should not worry or fret, but quickly bring our concerns to our God. God cares about every situation, small and large, and there is no situation too difficult for Him. Philippians 4:6,7 tells us, "Be anxious for nothing, 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.**

This is also a good picture of how God can work miracles in the heart of man. 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 raise up an iron ax head, He can change the hardest of hearts and bring him or her into a loving relationship with Himself.

## **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.



## **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.

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

## **PRAYER**

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 do not think that they are as important as we do. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.