



Lesson 132

Elisha and the Floating Axe Head

Story Elements

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: 2 Kings 6:1-7 • Setting: circa 845 B.C., near Gilgal • Main Characters: God, Elisha, and the sons of the prophets • Plot: A lost axe head is miraculously recovered. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key word(s): “ _____ ” (v 5) • Climax: 2 Kings 6:5 <i>But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.</i> |
|---|--|

Building Program

1. (vv 1-3) As the sons of the prophets grew in number, the need for a larger dormitory became apparent. Elisha gave his students permission to undertake the project, and he even accompanied them when they ventured to obtain _____ for construction.
2. (vv 4-5) While chopping down trees to use the logs, the axe head slipped off of an ax and fell in the water of the Jordan River.
 - (a) The student cried out, “Alas, Master, for it was _____!” John MacArthur notes, *“Iron was expensive and relatively rare in Israel at that time and the student-prophet was very poor...and would have had no means to reimburse the owner for it.”*¹
 - (b) (vv 6-7) Elisha went to the place where the axe head fell, threw in a _____, and the axe head miraculously floated to the surface of the water and was recovered.

Application

3. Matthew Henry points out some of the insights into this unusual school of prophets that we can learn from this story:
 - (a) The sons of the prophets were growing in _____. When the nation’s spirituality grew darker, the Lord was gracious in sending more prophets to preach and pray.
 - (b) They were _____ men. They lacked the funds to purchase even basic tools. Such will be the case for many of God’s servants. Though “narrow means” does not make one holy, it often accompanies those whose lives are dedicated to serving God. Matthew Henry said, *“Poverty is no bar to prophecy.”*
 - (c) They were _____ men. They made no request for marble or cedars, but were content to fetch the lumber available in the Jordan valley. Henry said, *“It becomes the sons of the prophets, who profess to look for great things in the other world, to be content with mean things in this.”*

¹ MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005) p 439.

Philippians 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

(d) They were _____ men. The ministry sometimes attracts those who view it as an easy gig, but these sons of the prophets were men willing to work and labor.

2 Thessalonians 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. 11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. 12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

4. Albert Barnes mentions, *“Elisha had evidently great kindness of heart. He could not see a grief without wishing to _____ it.”*² May the Lord help us to have tender hearts and to use our gifts to help others in need.

5. This miracle is a great illustration of God's power to _____ the unbeliever's iron heart from being lost to the muddy depths of sin and to make it useful in the LORD's work.

Ezekiel 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: 20 That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): “borrowed” • 1. wood • 2. a) borrowed; b) stick • 3. a) number; b) poor; c) humble; c) industrious • 4. remedy • 5. raise

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

² Barnes, Albert. *Notes on the Old Testament: I Samuel to Esther*. Ed. F. C. Cook, J. M. Fuller. London: John Murray, 1879. Print.