

The story of the raising of the lost axe-head is the story of a miracle of recovery and restoration. Thank God, He is still able to perform such miracles in human lives! In this incident, Elisha typifies the Lord Jesus (**v. 6**); the company of the prophets typify Christian workers (**v. 1**); and the axe-head speaks to us of the power, the anointing and the enabling of the Holy Ghost, without which all service must be ineffective (**vv. 5-6**).

2 Kings 6:7 “And he said, “Take it up.” So he reached out his hand and took it.”

- Grammatical Usage: “**Take it up**” in Hebrew is “rum” meaning, “to raise; to exalt.”
- Literal Interpretation: Then he said, “Raise it up.” So he reached out and took it.
- Contextual/Comparison: This message of service has three main sections:

1. A PATTERN TO BE APPROVED

In **vv. 1-4** we have a pattern of wholehearted service; a picture of what Christian service and servants should be. Notice the following characteristics:

- A. They were “**a company of the prophets**” (**v. 1**), and the disciples of Elisha. The first qualification for all Christian service is relationship with the Master.
- B. They met with Elisha (**v. 1**). Here is the idea of fellowship and communion, which is essential for effective service (**John 15:4**).
- C. They were burdened about the need for service (**v. 2**). They recognized the need and were anxious to get on with the work.
- D. They were commissioned men (**v. 2**). The prophet said to them, “**Go**” (**Matthew 28:19**).
- E. They realized their dependence upon their Master (**v. 3**). They were unprepared to undertake the task without him (**John 15:5**).
- F. They all took a share (**v. 2**). Every man joined in the task.
- G. They were energetic, keen workers (**v. 4**). They were equipped with the right tools for felling trees and the work of building.

Here, then, is a pattern to be approved. How great it would be if all the Lord’s workers had these seven characteristics! But in the story we notice there is:

2. A PERIL TO BE AVOIDED

V. 5 tells us that one worker lost his axe-head, the sharp cutting edge of all his service, without which all effort was useless. He did not lose the handle; from a distance it might have appeared as though his equipment was complete, but it was not complete (**Zechariah 4:6**). How foolish it would have been for him to have gone on working! He was working well, but gradually the axe-head slipped down the handle of the axe – into the water! It was a gradual process, as all backsliding is, and he lost his power and effectiveness. Notice:

- A. He lost his power while he was working.
- B. Perhaps he was working too energetically.
- C. He was conscious of his loss.
- D. He was deeply distressed about his loss.

Have you lost the axe-head? You used to know His power resting upon you, but now is your cry: “Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord?” If so, this story assures you that you may be restored, reinstated and re-equipped for the service of God. What must you do?

3. A PROCEDURE TO BE ADOPTED

Vv. 5-7 tell us about this, and if God can make a piece of iron swim then surely He can restore one of His own children who has wandered from Him? No one has gone too far for God that He cannot raise him. How can lost power, lost effectiveness and a lost experience of God be regained?

- A. We must immediately stop working. The man did that. It would have been foolish to try to work without the axe-head! Jesus said, “**Stay...until...**” (**Luke 24:49**).
- B. We must make a full and a frank confession to our Master. Immediately he was conscious of his loss the man cried out, “**Oh, my lord!**” (**v. 5**). If we have failed, we must make a full confession of our failure to the Lord Himself; then we may have the assurance of His forgiveness and cleansing (**1 John 1:9**).
- C. We must show our Master the place where we lost our effectiveness and our experience of His presence and power. The first question Elisha asked was, “Where did it fall?” He did not scold the young man; he asked him frankly to tell him what had happened. Where did you fail the Lord and lose the conscious realization of His presence and power in your life? Was it when you gave up your private devotions or your attendance at the house of God, when you had a misunderstanding with someone, when you made that unholy alliance, when you committed that secret sin or entered into that dishonest transaction? “**Where did it fall?**” You will never recover your axe-head until you tell your Lord just where you lost it.
- D. Then, we shall see the miracle performed! **V. 6** tells us that Elisha performed the miracle by the use of a “**stick**”; and the way back to God is by way of the Cross (**1 Peter 2:24**). His blood can cleanse us and make us whole. Trust Him, for **1 John 1:7** is our ground of assurance.
- E. Finally, we must put out our hand and take it. Here is the step of faith. **V. 7** tells us about it, and all the way through our Christian life it is necessary for us to appropriate by faith the provision that the Lord has made for our salvation and our victory through Christ. To act in faith in this way was a humbling experience for the son of the prophet, for probably others were watching as he bent down very low, put out his hand and took back that which he had lost.

➤ Conclusion: Do you need to take back that which has been lost?