

RE- Sermon Series

Re-Store the Cutting Edge

2 Kings 6:1-7

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Central Truth

It is imperative that we retrieve/recover that which has been lost. This will have a significant impact on the future.

Introduction

The Bible speaks of various gauges and measurements when it comes to our faith walk/relationship with God. Consider:

- Effective and productive - sharp vs. dull
- Capacity – full vs. empty
- Temperature - hot vs. cold (i.e. Laodicea)
- Distance and proximity - how far or how close are we walking with the Lord (i.e., Peter walked afar off)
- Depth - deep vs. shallow (i.e. knee deep vs. ankle deep)
- Light and darkness - illumination - oil and anointing (i.e. the five wise virgins vs. the five foolish)
- High vs. low – “come up” (i.e. John on the island of Patmos).

RE – Words for This Sermon

Restore, retrieve, reflect, recover, retain, remember, re-establish, re-take.

Background

At first glance it seems a bit strange that God would include a lost and found story in the Bible. What is even more peculiar is that the item is an ax head of all things. Although an ax was an important tool in early Bible days it hardly seems significant enough to be mentioned, let alone written about.

Obviously, there is something imbedded in this occurrence that God desires the reader to know about. Many applications of this story are possible. The story centers around the loss and recovery of an iron ax head. The ax head can represent various things; however, for the purpose of this message, the perspective will be that God has given each believer an iron ax head. The questions then become: What does it represent? How can it be lost? And more importantly, how can it be recovered?

Main Passage

The Ax Head Recovered (2 Kings 6:1-7)

¹ And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. ² 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." ³ Then one said, "Please consent to go with your servants." And he answered, "I will go." ⁴ So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. 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." ⁶ 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. ⁷ Therefore he said, "Pick it up for yourself." So he reached out his hand and took it.

Observations from the Passage

- In the midst of an expansion project, the company of the prophets re-locate near the **river**
- They cut down **trees** and assemble them into a new home or meeting place (this signifies God's people)
 - Isaiah 61:3 - *"that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."* (NKJV).
- The sons of the prophets or the company of prophets lived with Elisha the Prophet (their mentor)
 - The place where they lived or met as prophets, had become too small
 - They informed Elisha of the situation and requested that they move to the Jordan and build a bigger place
 - The sons of the prophets entered a building/expansion project.
- The plan was to go to the river Jordan to get lumber to build a new house
 - Every man would be responsible to cut down one beam for the new location.
- Elisha gives his approval and consent for the project
 - One of the sons of the prophets requested that Elisha join them
 - Elisha agreed to accompany them to the Jordan.
- As they were cutting down trees by the river one of them lost their ax head in the water
 - The person immediately informed Elisha of what had happened
 - The ax head was borrowed.
- Elisha asked him, "Where did it fall into the water?"
 - The person showed him the location.
- Elisha cuts down a stick and throws it in the water
 - He causes the iron ax head to float
 - He instructs the man to pick it up
 - The servant reaches into the river and picks up the iron ax head.

Main Points (PP)

1. **Caution! People at work:** The ax head can be lost while working towards expansion or increase of capacity (laboring for God)
 - In the process of serving God, we can lose our greatest tool of effectiveness and influence without any fault of our own
 - Sometimes we can work too hard and not rely on the grace of God
 - What is the ax head significant of and what is it symbolic of?
 - The original meaning of the word means to chop or to cut down and/or shape timber. Perhaps a modern-day image is the ability to influence or to shape the lives of others.

2. **Has anyone seen my ax?:** It is critical that a person realizes that they have lost their ax head and identify where it was last seen
 - Without the retrieval of the ax head, time and focus are lost and destiny maybe delayed
 - **The Ax Head:**
 - The iron ax head was an expensive tool
 - A member of the company of the prophets would not be able to afford it
 - The person would have to become a bondservant to pay it off; therefore, losing time and focus on their calling.

3. **Light as iron:** Elisha the Prophet relied on the supernatural power of God to retrieve the ax head
 - We need to be naturally supernatural
 - **How can we apply the lessons of losing the ax head in modern-day? What does it look like in real life?**
 - Not properly fastened to key things in life
 - The ax head was tied to the wooden handle by things that represent foundational truths in life
 - Working with things that we are not familiar with (the ax was borrowed)
 - Not appreciating the tools that we have been given (either their significance or ability).

4. **Speak into my life:** The immediate presence of a mentor/coach is critical in assisting with the retrieval process
 - The Kingdom speaks of spiritual fathers
 - **Things people say (excuses) when they lose their ax head**
 - “Oh well, let me make the best of this situation”
 - “How can I make this situation normal”?
 - “How can I fix this in my own strength”?
 - “That’s life, I guess”
 - “It could always be worse”
 - “At least I am not as bad as that person”
 - “I don’t have time right now”
 - “Maybe it will just fix itself”
 - “I am ok, no harm done”
 - “It wasn’t that bad”
 - “It does not matter anyway”.

5. **Cast your cares on the Lord:** God’s heart and care for His servants is revealed even in a small matter such a lost piece of metal

1 Peter 5:6-7

⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Steps on how to recover your ax head

- Location – identify the place (event) where you lost it
- Bring it to the surface – in other words, do not bury, avoid, forget, or deny it
- Be naturally supernatural – use the power, anointing and giftings of God to bring about the restoration.

Group Questions/Discussion

1. Can you pinpoint an event in your life where you could indicate that you lost your ax head?
2. How did losing your ax head impact you? What were the consequences?
3. Are you being disciplined by anyone?
4. Why do you think people just carry on with life rather than trying to retrieve what they have lost?
5. Discuss the three steps of recovery.
6. What are the things that hinder people from recovering their ax head?
7. What is our best remedy to the excuses we make?