



**PRELUDE TO PENTECOST
RESTORING THE CUTTING EDGE
DEVOTION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE**

2 Kings 6:1-7 ESV

Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, “See, the place where we dwell under your charge is too small for us. ² Let us go to the Jordan and each of us get there a log, and let us make a place for us to dwell there.” And he answered, “Go.” ³ Then one of them said, “Be pleased 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 felling a log, his axe head fell into the water, and he cried out, “Alas, my master! It was borrowed.” ⁶ Then the man of God said, “Where did it fall?” When he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and threw it in there and made the iron float. ⁷ And he said, “Take it up.” So he reached out his hand and took it.

Opening Thoughts:

- 2 Kings tells the story of a young prophet, trying to build God’s house, but has lost his edge. He finds himself standing by the river with the axe handle, but no axe.
- Have you ever found yourself doing everything you knew to do, yet feel like you are barely making a dent? Maybe the test and trials are so thick that you are not able to gain any traction? Or maybe you miss those times of experiencing a sweet presence of the Lord; it seems you have lost your edge in prayer and worship. Are you frustrated with the status quo in your spiritual life?

Key Takeaway: The effectiveness of your life is contingent upon the edge on your life.

- If you have lost your cutting edge, still swinging, going through the motions, but barely making a dent? You need to go back to the Master and get your edge back!

Three missteps the young prophets made and three steps to restore your cutting edge.

1) Internal growth was contingent on external forces (verse 1)

- The blame was placed on the place where they were dwelling, it was too small. So often we refuse to take responsibility and blame everyone or everything else.
- What or who have you found yourself blaming when you sense you have lost your spiritual edge? The pandemic? The economy? The government? Have you found yourself saying, “If it wasn’t for the....?”
- Shifting blame for the reason we are not effective reveals that we mistakenly conclude that our internal growth is contingent on external factors. Can you trust that God is using the present circumstances in your life right now to mold you and shape you?
- Principle: Your growth doesn’t have to be the consequence of your environment; your environment can become the consequence of your growth.

2) There is a way up that doesn't require first going down (verse 2-3)

- The Jordan was where Elisha was anointed by Elijah. Why do you suppose the spiritual sons of Elisha wanted to go and build at the Jordan? Maybe they wanted a short cut to the anointing that Elisha received.
- They wanted to build a bigger a in Jordan, was a place called descent (water flowing down), a place of transition (where Elisha received the mantle of Elijah), the place of repentance (turning from the old life to the new).
- They came to the right place but for the wrong reason. Sometimes the Lord will allow us to follow our foolish pursuits; failure is an excellent teacher if we will listen. As you reflect on your life, can you remember a time when God allowed you to descend so that He could then bring you back up and out? What did that feel like during the process? Were you humiliated, confused, frustrated? Did you see what God was doing during the process, or only as you looked back?
- Principle: In God's Kingdom there is no ascending unless there has first been a descending.
- God can't fill a vessel that's already full of itself. There are two options, be humbled or be humiliated.

3) They thought they could borrow what can only be bought (verse 5)

- Why do people borrow something? Either because we don't have it or because we are unwilling or unable to pay for it. What have you tried to borrow from someone else that you weren't willing to pay the price for?
- What kinds of things cannot be borrowed? Have you found yourself trying to borrow another's anointing or calling? How about another person's gifting or talents? What happened? Some things simply cannot be borrowed, they must be purchased, the price must be paid.
- Read Psalm 127:1. Have you ever felt like you have labored in vain? In the days of Elisha, an axe was not something you bought, it was something that had to be forged, therefore axe heads were costly. The process of forging was brutal and expensive. What did you learn from the brief video you watched about forging an axe head? How would you apply this spiritually to your own life? What is the forge that will sharpen your spiritual edge? How can you avail yourself to the fire that will cultivate, refine, and restore your cutting edge?
- Principle: It is in the pounding of the trials, tests, and tribulations that God allows to come our way that the Lord perfects us and matures our faith.

Consider how to restore your cutting edge.

1) To restore our cutting edge we must return to the place where we lost it (verse 6a)

- The man of God asked, where did it fall? Where might that place be for you? Maybe an upper room experience of waiting, back to an altar of surrender, back to a prayer closet where you prayed until something happened.
- It would be impossible to reclaim the edge without going back to the place it was lost.

2) To restore our cutting edge we must allow Christ to revive what was lost (verse 6b)

- The young prophets were looking for a beam, but Elisha found a branch.
- Read Jeremiah 33:15 and Isaiah 11:1-2. In the Old Testament the branch was a symbol of Christ. Years later a prophet would stand on the bank of these same waters and introduce the One who will baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11).
- Something supernatural took place, what was lost and buried was returned. How do you see this as a metaphor of the power of the resurrection? The branch didn't become like the iron, the iron became like the branch. How does this speak to you regarding any area in your life where you feel like you have lost your cutting edge?
- Principle: If you want to restore the edge on your life, you must become like the branch!

3) To restore our cutting edge we must receive what was lost (verse 7)

- What came out of the water was not like what went in to the water. Who had to reach in and pick up the axe head? What does this tell you about reclaiming your spiritual edge? Who is responsible to pay the price for restoring your spiritual edge?
- Read Galatians 2:20. What is Paul describing to the Galatians? How is this similar to what happened to the axe head at the Jordan?

Application:

- **Takeaway: The effectiveness of your life is contingent upon the edge of your life.**
- As you look back over the journey above through these six verses in 2 Kings for restoring your cutting edge, what can you do today to take the initial steps to regain your spiritual edge?