

References

2 Kings 6:1-7;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 260, 261



Memory Verse

"Ask and it will be
given to you; seek and
you will find"
(Matthew 7:7).



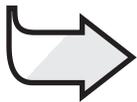
Objectives

The children will:

Know that God loves
them very much, and
He wants to solve their
problems, big or small.

Feel grateful that God
cares about all their problems.

Respond by trusting God
to solve their problems.



The Message

God cares about all
my problems.

Heavy Enough to Float

Monthly Theme

God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Men studying at the school of the prophets need a larger place. They meet with Elisha and discuss their needs. He goes with them to the banks of the river Jordan to cut down trees for a new building. While they are there, the borrowed axhead that one of the young men is using falls into the water and sinks. He cries out. Elisha goes to the place where the axhead fell in, and throws a piece of wood into the water. The axhead floats to the surface and is recovered.

This is a lesson about grace.

The story of the floating axhead reminds us that God cares about any problem that we have, big or small. He asks us to bring to Him anything that perplexes us. He will deal with it in the manner that is best for us.

Teacher Enrichment

"Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. . . . Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 100).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Does It Float?</i> B. <i>Ax Demo</i>	Bible, pan of water, things that float (plastic, sponge, stick, Styrofoam, etc.), things that don't float (spoon, rock, etc.) Bible, ax, person to demonstrate its use
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> gift box offering device chalkboard/whiteboard, chalk or marker
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	basin of water, small stick, rock, toy hatchet or plastic ax or Styrofoam "ax" covered with aluminum foil paper ax head shapes, marker Bibles, small tree-shaped paper cutouts
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Up and Away!</i>	Bibles, blown-up balloon for each child (helium if possible), markers
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Problem Catcher</i>	Bible, two for each child: small plastic cup, 18-inch (45-cm) length of yarn, piece of aluminum foil, label

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible
- pan of water
- things that float (plastic, sponge, stick, Styrofoam, etc.)
- things that don't float (spoon, rock, metal objects, etc.)

A. Does it Float?

Let the children put each thing into the water to see whether it floats.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What floated? What sank? Why did those things sink? Could you do anything to make them float? Have you ever dropped something in a river or lake? What happened? In our story today we will learn about something that sank, then floated. How do you think that could happen? We can get a clue from our memory verse.** Read Matthew 7:7 aloud; then ask how it might be a clue. Say: **This verse reminds us that . . .**



GOD CARES ABOUT ALL MY PROBLEMS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- ax
- person to demonstrate its use

B. Ax Demo

In advance, invite someone to come to your classroom and demonstrate the use of an ax. Let the children ask questions.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you learn about an ax?** (Accept answers.) **Have you ever watched someone use an ax?** (Accept answers.) **What must people remember when using an ax?** (To be careful so that no one gets hurt.)

Say: **Our story today is about someone who had a problem with an ax. Let's read Matthew 7:7 and find out how our memory verse might have encouraged the person.** Read the text together. **And here is today's message:**



GOD CARES ABOUT ALL MY PROBLEMS.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise **Any Time**



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40)
- "He's Everything to Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 43)
- "Anywhere With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 45)
- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **What problems did God solve in today's mission story?**



Offering

Say: **Sometimes God uses people to help solve other people's problems. He can use the money you give today to do just that.**

You Need:

- gift box
- offering device



Prayer

Make a heading that reads "Problems God Has Solved." Ask the children to mention problems that God has already solved in their lives. List them where all may see.

Make another heading: "Problems for God to Solve." Have the children suggest unsolved problems they wish to give to God. List them. Remember both lists in prayer.

You Need:

- chalkboard/whiteboard
- chalk or marker

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- basin of water
- small stick
- rock
- toy hatchet or plastic ax or Styrofoam "ax" covered with aluminium foil

Experiencing the Story

Props: Place the "ax" at the bottom of the basin of water. Place a rock or heavy object on it so it will not float. During the story, as you describe the stick thrown into the river, push the weight aside so the "ax" floats to the top.

When you say:	Children do:
ax, axhead	make a chopping motion
Elisha	nod head yes

If Readiness A was done, ask the following: **Do you remember our experiment at the beginning of our program, finding what floats and what sinks?** (yes) Repeat experiment with a rock and a little stick. **Our story today is about a floating miracle.**

Read or tell the story.

One day a group of young men who studied at the school of the prophets heard good news. The prophet **Elisha** [nod head yes] was coming to visit the school. They could talk with him and learn from him. And they could tell him that the building where they stayed was too small. They needed a bigger building.

When the students told **Elisha** [nod head yes] about their need for more room, he agreed. So they set aside a day to go to the banks of the Jordan River and cut logs for their new school. They asked the prophet **Elisha** [nod head yes] to go with them.

One young man borrowed an expensive **ax**. [Make a chopping motion.] He didn't have his own, but wanted to help build the new school building too. Happily he

joined the group at the river on the special work day.

Some of the young men chopped down trees; others cut the trees into boards. Prophet **Elisha** [nod head yes] worked right along with them, reminding them of God's love and care.

Then, with one swing of an **ax** [make a chopping motion], everything changed. The young man with the borrowed **ax** [make a chopping motion] lifted it into the air. But this time the iron **axhead** [make a chopping motion] flew off and landed with a splash in the river.

"Oh, master!" the student cried out to prophet **Elisha** [nod head yes]. "The **ax** [make a chopping motion] was borrowed, and I have no money to pay for it!" His friends and **Elisha** [nod head yes] came running. They stared with him into the dark, swiftly flowing water. No one could see the lost **axhead** [make a chopping motion].

"Where into the water did it go?" **Elisha** [nod head yes] asked. All the young man could do was point. **Elisha** [nod head yes] smiled and looked around at the trees. Finding just the right tree, he cut off a small branch. Then he walked to the river's edge and threw the branch where the young man had pointed.

The branch made a little splash. Then ever so slowly the **axhead** [make a chopping motion] came up to the top of the water and started to float! [Make the "axhead" float to the top of the basin.]

A gasp went up from the students. The biggest gasp of all came from the young man who had just moments before thought that his life was ruined.

God, through **Elisha**, [nod head yes] had turned the young man's accident into a miracle. He had taken an ordinary day and turned it into a day to remember forever.

As the tired but excited young men walked back to school that evening with their friend, they probably talked about what had happened that day. They were more sure than ever that God loved and cared for them. They knew that no problem was too big or too small to take to God.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How do you think that young man felt when the axhead flew into the water?** (upset, sad, afraid, worried, etc.) **Why didn't the axhead float?** (It was made of iron; iron does not float.)

What did Elisha do? (He took a branch and threw it into the water.) **What happened to the axhead?** (It came to the surface; it floated.) **Who made the axhead float?** (God.) If children say it was Elisha, establish the fact that he was only doing what God told him to do. **God cared about the young man's problems, and He cares about yours and mine too. We can always take our problems to Him because He really cares. Let's say our message together:**



GOD CARES ABOUT ALL MY PROBLEMS.

Memory Verse

In advance, cut out paper axhead shapes and write one word of the memory verse on each. **"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find" (Matthew 7:7).** (Don't forget the

You Need:

- paper axhead shapes
- marker

reference.) Select children to each take a shape and put them in the proper order. Read the memory verse together; then repeat it several times. Each time you repeat it, remove one of the shapes, leaving a blank space. By the time you finish removing the shapes, the children should have memorized the verse.

Bible Study

In advance, write the following (references only) on tree cutouts:

2 Kings 6:1-6 (axhead sunk)

Exodus 16:2-4 (Israelites were hungry)

2 Kings 5:13, 14 (Naaman needs to be healed)

Exodus 17:1, 5, 6 (Israelites were thirsty)

1 Samuel 1:11, 20 (Hannah wants to have a baby)

Mark 5:22, 23, 35, 41, 42 (Jairus' daughter is dying; a woman has been sick for 12 years)

Give each tree to a child who is able to find the reference and read it aloud. (Adults assist as necessary.) Ask the class to tell what problem is revealed in each text.

Debriefing

Ask: **Were these problems all alike?** (No, but they were all too much for a person to fix.) **What was the first step in solving each of the problems?** (asking God or Jesus for help) **When you have a problem, what will you do?** (Ask God for help because . . .)



GOD CARES ABOUT ALL MY PROBLEMS.

You Need:

- Bibles
- small tree-shaped paper cutouts

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- Bibles
- blown-up balloon on a string for each child (helium-filled if possible)
- markers

Up and Away!

Be sure the balloons are blown up in advance. Have the children write or draw on their balloon a problem they or their family are facing.

Say: **The young man's problem ahead rose up to the top of the water after he asked Elisha for help. God cared about his problem. God cares about your problems too. Let's send your problems up as if they could go up to God.**

*Have the children go outside and release their balloons to float upward. (Balloons will not float upward unless helium-filled.) **How do we send our problems to God in real life?** (by praying) **Let's pray about your problems**

now. Pray about the problems that are written on the ascending balloons. Read Philippians 4:6 together.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think about sending our problems to God in this way? How do we usually give our problems to God?**

Our Bible tells us what happens when we give our problems to God. Let's read Philippians 4:7. Find and read it together.

The next time you have a problem—big or small—what will you do first? (Send my problem to God by praying.) **Why? Let's answer with today's message:**



GOD CARES ABOUT ALL MY PROBLEMS.

*Check the laws of your jurisdiction on the rules for releasing helium-filled balloons. Adjust activity accordingly. One option would be to release balloons in the classroom only.

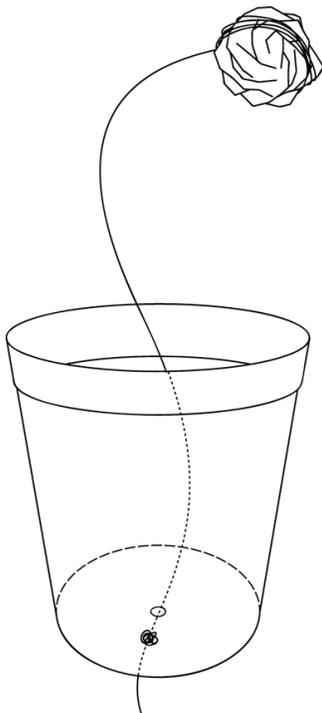
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Sharing the Lesson

Problem Catcher

Distribute the items as listed. Help the children make a small hole in the center of the bottom of the plastic cup, insert one end of the yarn through the cup and the hole, and tie a large knot below the hole to prevent the yarn from pulling through. Wrap the other end of the yarn with the foil and crumple it into a ball shape. (See illustration below.) Attach a label that reads "Problem Catcher—1 Peter 5:7."

Have the children swing the foil ball up and over into the cup. As they do, have them think of a problem, big or small, and silently thank God for taking care of it. Each child will make another "problem catcher" to give away.



Debriefing

Say: **The Bible says to cast or throw our problems on God because He cares. Let's read 1 Peter 5:7. God is our "Problem Catcher." How much of our anxiety (problems) does God tell us to cast on Him? (all) Nothing is too big or too small to give to Him.**

Who else has problems? Who will you share your extra "problem catcher" with this week? Ask the children to tell you their plans. As you give away your "problem-catcher" cup, share 1 Peter 5:7 with the person. Let's say today's message one more time:



GOD CARES ABOUT ALL MY PROBLEMS.

Closing

Sing "A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 98). Invite the children to give their cares to Him every day in the new week. Close with prayer, thanking God for caring about all our problems.

You Need:

- Bible
- Two for each child:
- small plastic cup
- 18-inch (45-cm) length of yarn
- piece of aluminum foil
- label

Heavy Enough to Float

References

2 Kings 6:1-7;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 260, 261

Memory Verse

“Ask and it will be
given to you; seek
and you will find”
(Matthew 7:7).

The Message

God cares about
all my problems.

Pedro needed a calculator to do part of his math homework. But he did not own one. José let him borrow his calculator until the next day.

When Pedro arrived home from school, he opened his backpack. He took out his math book and looked for José’s calculator. It was gone! He called his friends, but no one knew where it was. What a problem! What was he going to tell José?

A young man in our Bible story today lost something that he borrowed. And he was very worried too.

One day some young men who studied at a special school of the prophets heard good news. The prophet Elisha was coming to visit them. They were happy about that. They could tell Elisha anything, and he would listen.

The young men knew that the building where they stayed was too small, and they wanted to build another place. They talked it over with Elisha. He agreed, and they decided to build a bigger building. So they set aside a special day to go to the banks of the Jordan River. There they would cut logs for their new school. Elisha agreed to go with them.

One young man had borrowed an ax. He wanted to help build the new school building too. Happily he joined the group working at the river that day. Some chopped down trees; others cut the trees into boards. Prophet Elisha worked right along with them. As they worked, they talked of God’s love and care.

Then, with one swing of the ax, everything changed. The young man with the borrowed ax lifted it into the air. The iron axhead flew off! With a splash it landed in the river!

“Oh, master!” the student cried out. “The ax was borrowed! And I have no money to pay for it.” His friends came running. They all stared into the dark water. Elisha hurried to the riverbank too. But he couldn’t see the lost axhead either.

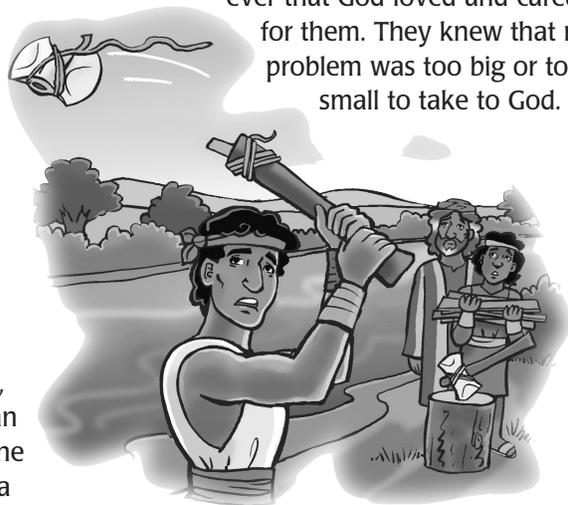
“Where did it go into the water?” Elisha asked. All the young man could do was point. Elisha turned and looked around at the trees. Finding just the right tree, he cut off a small branch. Then he carried it to the river’s edge. He threw the stick into the water where the young man had pointed.

The stick made a little splash. Then ever so slowly the stick and the axhead came up to the surface! They floated together on the water!

A gasp went up from the students. The biggest gasp of all came from the young man who had lost the axhead. Just moments before, he had thought that his life was ruined.

God, through Elisha, had turned the young man’s accident into a miracle. He had taken an ordinary workday and turned it into a day to remember forever.

The tired but excited young men walked back to school that evening. They talked with Elisha about what had happened. They were more sure than ever that God loved and cared for them. They knew that no problem was too big or too small to take to God.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Take a walk with your family near a stream or pond. Throw some rocks, tree twigs, leaves, seeds, etc., into the water. (Don't throw in litter such as paper, etc.) Which ones float? Which ones sink?
- Read today's Bible lesson with your family. Then find and read together Matthew 7:7.
- Sing a favorite song about God's care before prayer. Then thank Him for it.

Sunday

- With your family, read and discuss 2 Kings 6:1-4. What is a miracle? Have a family member help you look up the word in a dictionary.
- What tools would workers use today to build a new school?
- Make some ax-shaped cutouts. Write one word of your memory verse on each. Mix them up; then arrange them in the correct order.
- Thank God for hearing your prayers.

Monday

- During worship, read 2 Kings 6:5-7.
- Write "Things That Float" at the top of a piece of paper. Draw pictures of things that float. Turn the paper over and write "Things That Can't Float" on the back. Draw some things that can't float. Draw an axhead on the correct side of the paper.
- Experiment with different household objects to see what floats and what sinks. Tell your family about it.
- Arrange your memory verse cutouts. Sing "Jesus Loves Me" before prayer. Thank Him for His love.

Tuesday

- Look up these texts to discover other tools used in Bible times: Exodus 21:6 ___; Joel 3:13 _____; Isaiah 44:13 _____; Jeremiah

10:4 _____.

- Which of these tools are used today? How are they used? Which might Elisha and the young men have used?
- Arrange your memory verse cutouts. Tell what the verse means to you. Has God solved any problems for you today? Thank Him for doing so.

Wednesday

- Use your problem catcher made in Sabbath School as you describe a problem. As you catch the foil ball, thank Jesus for taking care of the problem. Or list your problems on paper. Then tear the list into tiny pieces. Can you put it together again? Let God take your problems away. Thank Him for doing so.
- In a shallow box, create a scene of this week's story with sand, twigs, and cutouts.
- Say your memory verse without help. Sing a song about God's love before prayer.

Thursday

- With your family, read and discuss Matthew 11:28. If you have a problem, how does this verse make you feel?
- Find the memory verse in as many different versions of the Bible as you can. Write out the version you like the best. Then say your memory verse as you have learned it this week.
- Sing "Thank You, Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 101).

Friday

- Act out your Bible story for family worship. Ask your family to tell you about times God has helped solve their problems. Read and discuss Hebrews 13:5, 6 together.
- Tell what your memory verse means as you arrange your memory verse cutouts in order.
- Sing songs of praise to God for His goodness. Then thank Him for it.