

# The Glory Returns To The Temple

Ezekiel 43:1-12

## **MEMORY VERSE**

EZEKIEL 43:7

“Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.”

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

Poster board, markers, or crayons, paper, scissors, tape and a couple of blindfolds.

Four to five cups of rice, a large bowl, a rubber glove for each child (available from the nursery), and one small safety pin for each child.

Various colors of markers.

## **ATTENTION GETTER!**

### **Take Me to the Temple**

This game is a variation of Pin the Tail on the Donkey. You will need poster board, markers, or crayons, paper, scissors, tape, and a couple of blindfolds. Before class, draw a temple on poster board and cut it out (make it fairly large 12”- 18”). At the beginning of class, tape the temple to the wall.

Give the children a piece of paper and allow them to draw a person. Color and cut it out. Explain that we are going to play a game like “Pin the Tail on the Donkey.” Place a small piece of tape on the back of each person that is cut out. Then have the children take turns being blindfolded and spun around. Then they can attempt to stick their person onto the temple. Not many will make it. Now, give them all another turn--this time, without the blindfold. Everyone, this time, should get his or her person to the temple.

The children of Israel had become blind to spiritual things, hardened in sin and idolatry. No longer did they experience the presence of God among them. But, Ezekiel pointed to a future day when they would once more enjoy the presence of God dwelling with them, not only would the presence of God fill the temple, but the whole earth.

## LESSON TIME!

Ezekiel was a prophet to those who had been carried away as captives to Babylon. While He warned of God's future judgment if the people did not repent of their sin and idolatry, he also turned their attention to a "far-away" day when the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would return to rule and reign on earth. God's glory would return not only to fill the temple, but shine throughout the whole earth.

Did you know the Bible says we are the temple of the Holy Spirit? The glory of God is dwelling in us who have embraced Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 6:19,20 state, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." **We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.**

### EZEKIEL 43:1-3

Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east.

And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.

It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face.

In a vision, the angel of the Lord brings Ezekiel to the gate that faces toward the east. Just as the glory of God had departed from the temple by the gate to the East (Ezekiel's prior vision), His glory will one day return in the same manner. This is most likely a reference to the second coming of Jesus Christ who will come in great glory in the clouds. Clouds in the Bible most often represent a multitude of people. Those people will be us—the church of Jesus Christ—who return with Him to the earth! His voice will be like “the voice of many waters.” The book of Revelation identifies this as the voice of Jesus Christ.

Again, Ezekiel falls on His face to worship. When we see the glory of the Lord face to face one day, no doubt we will drop to our knees and worship the Lord. What an awesome day that will be!

#### EZEKIEL 43:4-5

And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east.

The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

The glory of the Lord will fill the temple. What is “glory”? The word in Hebrew actually means heaviness or weightiness. Looking back at verse 2, we see “the glory of God” is Christ Jesus--He is the One who will come from the east whose voice is like the sound of many waters.

Now, think also, about God's great love for you—that the Lord of glory has chosen to dwell within you! When we ask Jesus Christ to come into our hearts, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside us. May we remember that our purpose, as His temple, is to bring honor and glory to Him. May all we say and do glorify the Lord. **We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.**

### EZEKIEL 43:6-8

Then I heard Him speaking to me from the temple, while a man stood beside me.

And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry or with the carcasses of their kings on their high places.

"When they set their threshold by My threshold, and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me, they defiled My holy name by the abominations which they committed; therefore I have consumed them in My anger.

Here we see a pretty clear picture of why the glory of God had departed from the temple. The children of Israel had been worshipping idols in the "high places." Even the kings and leaders of Israel were guilty.

Remember, as God's children, we are privileged to be His temple. Do we worship idols on our "high places?" That may seem a ridiculous question, but anything or anyone that we feel is more important than God, is an idol to us. God desires that His temple be devoted to Him. While worshipping idols, the children of Israel

became guilty of many other wicked acts. We, too, will find one sin will lead to another sin when we allow other things or people to become more important than God.

As we reflect on the glory of the Lord departing from the temple—the sad consequences of the Israelites continuing in idolatry and rebellion--it reminds us that we cannot continue to turn from God to our wicked ways and expect Him to forever be there and bless us. May we continually ask the Lord to search our heart for our “high places.” **We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.**

#### **EZEKIEL 43:9**

**"Now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.**

God yearned to restore fellowship with His wayward children, the nation Israel. He desired to “dwell in their midst forever.” This was the appeal and promise of a loving Father to His children—the nation Israel who had rebelled—as well a glimpse into the far away future, the millennial reign where God will dwell in the midst of His people forever.

The Bible says God is calling all men to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). His desire is that we all experience close fellowship with Him. He desires to dwell within you. Jesus took the penalty for our sins on the cross so that forgiveness and restoration with God is possible to all who will embrace Him by faith.

#### **EZEKIEL 43:12**

**"This is the law of the temple: The whole area surrounding the mountaintop is most holy. Behold, this is the law of the temple.**

Perhaps we are sure we are a Christian. We have accepted Jesus free gift of salvation, and He now dwells within us. As His temple, how important that we realize that we are to be holy--pure and set apart exclusively for Him!

We are given this exhortation in 2 Corinthians 6:16-18: "And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' Therefore 'Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty'."

May our commitment to keep His temple holy be a strong one. May we not allow idol worship—things to become more important than God to us. May we be quick to turn to the Lord accepting His forgiveness and cleansing when the Holy Spirit points out areas of sin in our lives. May our temple be one set apart for worshipping God only and bringing glory to Him. We will then know the joy of His dwelling and reigning within us, and we will fulfill the purpose of our existence—to fellowship with God and bring Him pleasure!  
**We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.**

## Treasure Hunt

For this game, you will need 4–5 cups of rice, a large bowl, a rubber glove for each child and one small safety pin for each child. Fill the bowl with the rice and mix in the safety pins. Let the children line up, put on a rubber glove, and take turns trying to find something in the rice (don't tell them what they are looking for). Most, hopefully, won't find anything. Give the children another turn with the glove removed. Now, everyone should be able to find a safety pin.

Picture the glove as sin and idolatry—things that keep us from finding great treasure—a close relationship with Jesus Christ. There may be things in our hearts that keep us from close fellowship with the Lord. We need to pray God will help us search our hearts. God called His people to repent so that His glory might dwell in their midst. When we remove idolatry and sin from our lives, God can fill our lives with His Spirit and enable us to live for His pleasure and glory.

## **PRAYER**

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to remember they are the temples of the Holy Spirit and that their lives should serve to glorify God. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.