

The Watchman #13
The Return of God's Glory

Word

Scripture Reference

Ezekiel 38-43

Discussion Questions

1. The phrase “to God be the glory” is so commonly said by Christians, but what does it really mean to give God the glory? Site some instances that you usually say, “Praise God!” or “To God be the Glory!” At the time you ascribed glory to God, could you honestly say that God is indeed glorified because you were faithfully walking with Him and living according to His Word?
2. In the beginning chapters of the book of Ezekiel, we see God's physical presence leave Jerusalem because of the terrible sins of His people. When God's glory left, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the temple along with it. Because of this, the Israelites thought that the glory of God would never return to reside with them again. But in a message to encourage His people, God promised that His glory would return (ch. 38-43). The Bible tells us that the glory of God will be declared to all the nations in the future Millennial Kingdom, and as part of that restoration of His people a new temple will be built, signifying a new relationship between God and His children under the new covenant. Four temples are mentioned in the Bible: Solomon's temple, Zerubabel's/Herod's temple, the Tribulational (Great Tribulation) temple, and the Millennial temple. In verses 40:1-4, God shows Ezekiel a vision of the Millennial temple which Ezekiel describes in great detail in chapters 40-43. Why is the Millennial temple different from the other temples that were built in the past? What would make this temple very special? How would this temple encourage those who are feeling hopeless in their standing before the Lord? Why

would the presence of the living God residing in the temple make a big difference in a worshipper's life?

3. In Ezekiel's vision, the glory of God returns in a very dramatic way. It came in the full grandeur and majesty that it left with. It is the same vision of God's glory that Ezekiel saw in chapter 1. The fullness of God's glory is not diminished when it returns in the Millennium temple. Why did God's glory leave the temple in the first place? Why is He able to return this time? What changes have been done? In chapter 43:1-12, we find three conditions that must be met for God's glory to return (for Him to be truly glorified in our lives):
 - a. ***God is glorified when our life's focus is only on Him and no one else (v. 5-7).*** God cares more about how you honor Him in faithful focus on Him, rather than in what is actually achieved. Why is focusing on worship more important than service to God? Is it okay to miss worship service because you are involved in serving in the choir, children ministry, or other ministries in your church? Why or why not? How do you give glory to God by doing your best in whatever endeavor you are involved?
 - b. ***God is glorified when in our lives, evil things and sin acts are far away (v.8-9).*** The further sin is taken away, the greater God's glory in our lives can be made evident. Discuss why sin hinders God's glory. What does 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 tell you about living in holiness and being separated from sin? Share how you could stay far away from sin.
 - c. ***God is glorified when we live our lives according to His standards in preparation for when we see Him (v. 10-12).*** Through the Scriptures, God has given us His standard on how to honor Him. His standard never changes; He is never out of touch with the culture nor the times. Why is your own standard of goodness not enough to give glory to God? Do you live according to the standard God has set for you? How are you able to do it?

Walk

In the future there will be the restoration of the ideal relationship between God and His people. God is ready to be in a working relationship with His people when they consecrate themselves—setting their lives apart. Consecration begins with a self-examination of your life. Ask yourself:

- Is there anything that takes my focus away from my sole focus and attention on the Lord? Are there idols in my life that I need to get rid of—the idol of possession, prestige, position, material things?
- Are there any sinful acts/attitudes and evil objects that I need to separate from my life in order to glorify God?
- Is there anything in my life that is lived against the standard of God? Have I twisted God’s clear instructions for how I should live my life? Am I willing to make a concerted effort to realign my life to God’s standard so that I may glorify Him with my life?

Through the way you live your life, God’s glory should be so evident that others can say of your life, “Glory be to God’s name!”

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, my prayer is that I will glorify You in my life. I know that it can be easily said than done because a lot of things in this world can easily distract me to focus only on You. I fail You by being tempted to fall in to sin instead of running away from it. And I certainly don’t live according to your standard. If this is so, how could I ever glorify you in my life? But thank you Lord that I can do it with Your help. Help me to live my life to please You and that when others see me, they would see You and glorify You. In Jesus’ name. Amen.