

# Hezekiah Cleanses The Temple

2 Chronicles 29:3-19

## **MEMORY VERSE**

2 CHRONICLES 29:11

“My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should minister to Him and burn incense.”

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

A small potato for each group (for a large class form up to 4 – 6 groups) and a watch with a second hand.

A “God’s House” template, scissors, construction paper, crayons, and glue.

A Hula-Hoop.

## **ATTENTION GRABBER!**

### **The Potato Shuffle**

In our lesson today we will learn that because of sin things can get neglected, lost or stolen. This game will show how slow and long it can take sometimes to do something. The process of God’s work in our lives can sometimes take a very long time.

You will need a small potato for each group (for a large class form 4–6 groups) and a watch with a second hand. Form at least two groups and have these groups stand in lines at opposite ends of the class. Take a potato and demonstrate the following procedure.

Place your feet closely together. Set the potato on top of your feet. Carefully shuffle your feet so you move forward, keeping the potato balanced on the tops of your feet. After everyone has seen your demonstration, give the first person in one of the lines the potato. The idea is for this person to shuffle along to the first person in the opposite line, pass off the potato, and then have that

person shuffle back to the next person in the first line. Keep track of the time it takes for everyone to shuffle with the potato. Allow the groups to race if they like.

If children have trouble keeping the potato on top of their feet, allow them to place it on the floor between their feet and move by waddling with both feet always touching the potato. The younger the children, the closer together you should move your opposing lines. This way it can go faster and the children in line won't get bored.

## LESSON TIME!

In 2 Chronicles 28:24, King Ahaz had closed the temple doors and set up places of idol worship throughout Jerusalem and Judah. Under King Hezekiah we will see revival come to the nation. Hezekiah was the godly son of the godless Ahaz, who desired to eliminate the idols of his father and again establish the worship of the Lord God. God's word says of him, "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David, his father, had done" (2 Chronicles 29:2).

We learn that it is very important that we never neglect the Lord or His things. Our hearts are the temple of the Holy Spirit today. We should never neglect the work that the Lord is doing inside of our hearts or neglect Him. **We should never neglect to worship the Lord.**

### 2 CHRONICLES 29:3-5

In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them.

Then he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them in the East Square,

and said to them: "Hear me, Levites! Now sanctify yourselves, sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy place.

We are told that Hezekiah "opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them." His father, Ahaz, had devastated the temple, and here is the account of his son reopening and restoring the temple. God desires that His house be open to everyone. We should be good stewards and care for whatever building we worship Him in.

Hezekiah attended to the things of God as his first business, knowing that for a kingdom to go well, God must always be put first. It was Hezekiah who approached the priests and the Levites on the restoration of the temple. What does that speak of their hearts? Had the idolatry of King Ahaz caused the hearts of God's own ministers to harden? Those who serve idols often find their hearts as hard and cold as what they serve. As we serve the one and true living God, who is full of compassion and mercy, our hearts of stone become hearts of flesh.

In verse 5, Hezekiah calls the priests and Levites to sanctify themselves, and then to sanctify the house of the Lord. To purify the temple they must first sanctify themselves. They had to remove all that was unclean from the sanctuary, all the abominations of idolatry.

The New Testament tells us that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is important that we keep our hearts clean and sweep away the rubbish that sometimes wants to collect inside of our hearts. There are things that have no benefit being in our hearts or in our minds. All we have to do is just remove those things. Sweep out our hearts and ask the Lord to take those things away. **We should never neglect to worship the Lord.**

## 2 CHRONICLES 29:6-9

"For our fathers have trespassed and done evil in the eyes of the LORD our God; they have forsaken Him, have turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD, and turned their backs on Him.

"They have also shut up the doors of the vestibule, put out the lamps, and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel.

"Therefore the wrath of the LORD fell upon Judah and Jerusalem, and He has given them up to trouble, to desolation, and to jeering, as you see with your eyes.

"For indeed, because of this our fathers have fallen by the sword; and our sons, our daughters, and our wives are in captivity.

Hezekiah points out that it was “our fathers.” It was not only Ahaz, but also those with him who had been guilty in forsaking God, and turning their backs on Him. Anyone who turns his or her back on God’s law forsakes God Himself. They had neglected the care of the place of worship- the doors were closed to people, the lamps were not lit, and the incense was not burned.

Matthew Henry says, “There are still such neglects as these, and they are no less culpable, when the word is not duly read and opened (for that was signified by the lighting of the lamps) and when prayers and praises are not duly offered up, for that was signified by the burning of incense.”

We are also told that “they brought not burnt offerings in the sanctuary to the God of Israel,” which does not necessarily mean that there was no more legal sacrificial worship, but only that there

were no burnt offerings to the God of Israel. The sacrifices offered on the altar of burnt offering done by Ahaz were not sacrifices that were offered to the God of Israel, but his sacrificial offering may have been to idols, or pagan worship.

What was the result of this behavior? The wrath of God came on Judah and Jerusalem. As the Living Bible describes, it, “He has caused us to be objects of horror, amazement, and contempt, as you see us today. Our fathers have been killed in war, and our sons and daughters and wives are in captivity because of this.”

The result of rebellion against the Lord is always disaster. Their disobedience had caused them to be given to troubles, the sword and to captivity. It is never wise to neglect the Lord. He loves each of us and desires only good for our lives. If we chose to go astray, He will discipline us, because of His long-suffering and goodness toward us. Hebrews 12:6 tells us, “For whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives.” **We should never neglect to worship the Lord.**

## Respecting God’s House

In today’s lesson we learned that we need to take care of God’s house. We should not neglect the worship of God. Use the enclosed God’s House template. You will also need a sheet of construction paper for each child, scissors, glue, and crayons.

Follow the instructions listed on the template.

### 2 CHRONICLES 29:10-11

"Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us.

"My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should minister to Him and burn incense."

To turn away this anger of God, Hezekiah desires to make a covenant with the Lord by restoring His worship. He became fully determined to worship only God and to worship Him in the way He had commanded. As the nation's leader, he not only committed himself to repentance, but also all the people. It is true that a leader can only lead where he himself goes. Ahaz led the people to idol worship, but Hezekiah would lead them to the worship of the Lord.

He exhorts the Levites to not neglect the performance of their duty. He encourages them to no longer be careless in their calling. It is sad when anyone takes the call of God carelessly. We need to examine our hearts, and test it according to Colossians. 3:17, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

He calls them "my sons," suggesting that he had a relationship with them. As a father leads his children, he would lead them, and he wanted them to respond to that leading. He reminds them of the duty God had called them to complete. They were to sanctify themselves through repentance, and then sanctify the temple, by removing all the uncleanness from it.

He reminds them also that it was the Lord unto whom they should minister, no one else. In our lives we must think about to whom we are ministering. Is it the Lord, or is it ourselves, or is it someone or something else? **We should never neglect to worship the Lord.**

## 2 CHRONICLES 29:12-17

Then these Levites arose: Mahath the son of Amasai and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites; of the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel; of the Gershonites, Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah;

of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah;

of the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel.

And they gathered their brethren, sanctified themselves, and went according to the commandment of the king, at the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD.

Then the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse it, and brought out all the debris that they found in the temple of the LORD to the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took it out and carried it to the Brook Kidron.

Now they began to sanctify on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the LORD. Then they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.



It seems that his exhortation was received with gladness. The Levites that were there assembled their brethren and set to work, after they had all sanctified themselves, to purify the temple. We see it was definitely a needed work, to cleanse their hearts and the temple.

There are fourteen heads of the various families and branches of Levi who brought together the brethren to work on cleansing the temple. The priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord to cleanse it and remove all the uncleanness that was there, all the way into the court and the Levites carried it out into the valley of the Brook Kidron, away from the temple.

In eight days they cleared and cleansed the temple, and in eight days more the courts of the temple. They now took their work seriously and set about to do it as quickly and as well as they could.

## 2 CHRONICLES 29:18-19

Then they went in to King Hezekiah and said, "We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, the altar of burnt offerings with all its articles, and the table of the showbread with all its articles.

"Moreover all the articles which King Ahaz in his reign had cast aside in his transgression we have prepared and sanctified; and there they are, before the altar of the LORD."

The priests then let Hezekiah know that all the things that had been profaned were now sanctified according to the law of God, and were now ready to be used again whenever he wanted to use them. That which had been profaned through idolatry was now purified and cleansed, fit for the Lord. Jesus has taken each one of us; purified and cleansed us by His blood, making us acceptable in the Father's sight. Now we must not neglect to use the gifts or calling He has given us for His glory.

## What's All The "Hoop"la?

For this game you will need a Hula Hoop.

Have children form a circle, holding hands with those on either side. Give the first child a Hula Hoop. Explain that this child must pass his or her entire body through the hoop, then pass the hoop down the line so it goes over the body of the next person, and so on. What makes this difficult is that the chain of hands must never be broken! It's a challenge for kids to get their bodies through the hoop when they can't let go of those beside them.

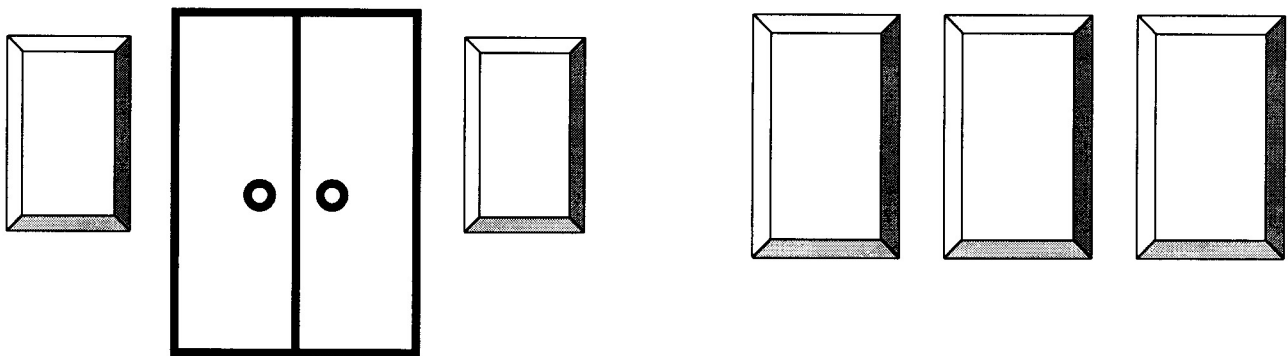
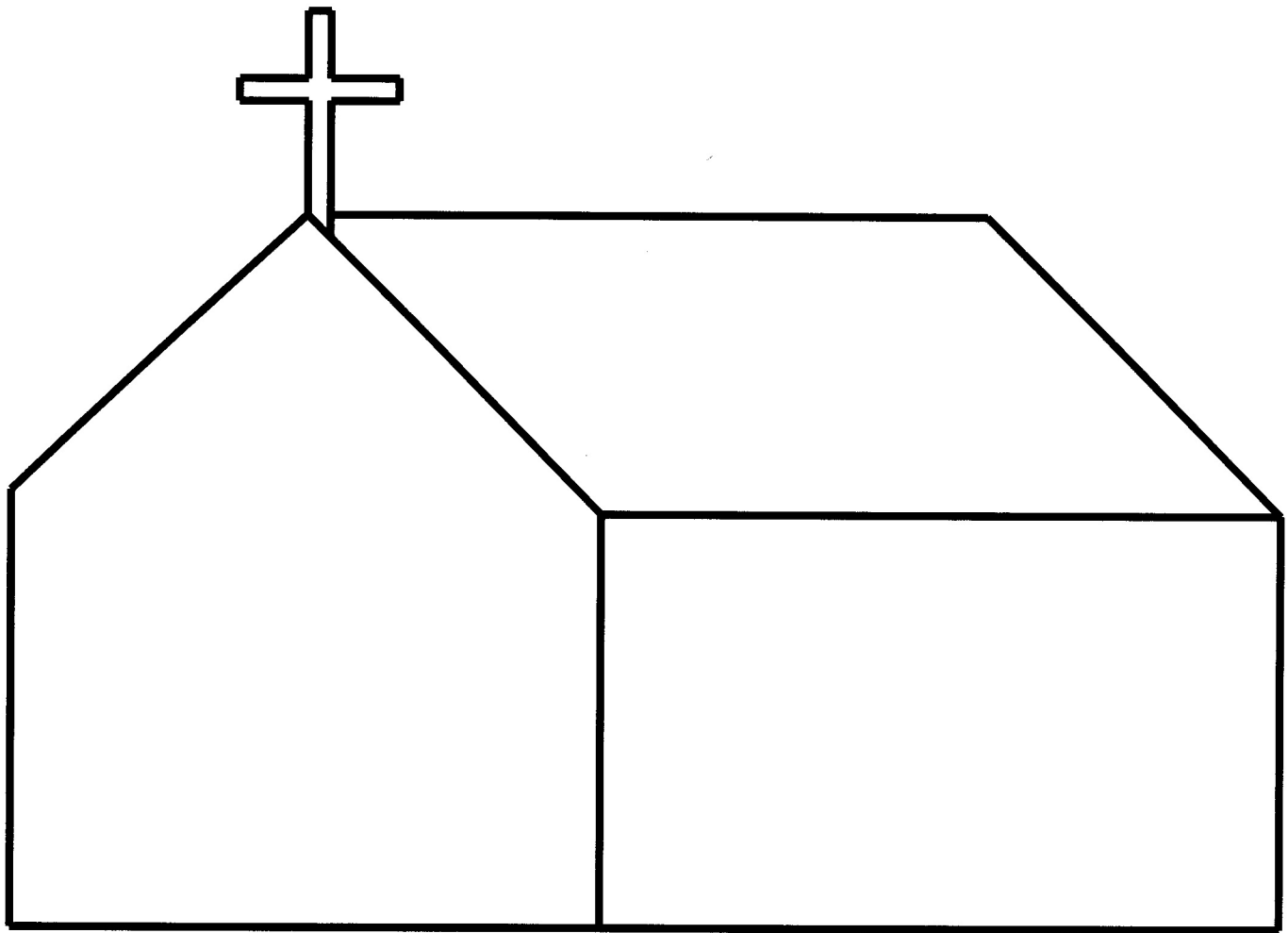
Play several times, timing how long it takes for kids to get the hoop from one end of the line to the other. As kids play, they may realize the hoop will move faster as they help each other. They don't have to stay in a straight line, so those with free hands on the ends of the line could help those in the middle. Don't point this out immediately; see if kids can figure out these tricks themselves. The more they help each other, the faster they'll get at passing the hoop!

ADD SPIRITUAL ASPECT -JUST AS THE PEOPLE WORKED TOGETHER TO CLEANSE THE TEMPLE SO YOU MUST WORK TOGETHER TO GET THE HOOP TO THE OTHER SIDE, SET ABOUT TO DO IT AS QUICKLY AND AS WELL AS YOU CAN JUST AS THEY DID THE TEMPLE???

## PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to never neglect the Lord and the worship of Him. Ask the Lord for strength to always keep focused on the Lord and keep Him in first place in our hearts. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

Template - Respecting God's House



1. Help make God's house look better. Color and cut out the building and parts.
2. Glue the church onto blue construction paper, and then glue the parts where they belong.
3. Next glue a strip of green under the church for grass. Draw bushes, trees or clouds if you like.
4. Write out the phrase "Do not neglect the worship of the Lord" on your picture.
5. Take it home to remind you to always worship the Lord and take care of His house.