

CASKET EMPTY:

God's Plan of Redemption through History

Old Testament Overview

Session 5 - Exile

Parts of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah, some Psalms



Approximate Dates: 586-539 BC

Tracing the Lineage

Adam → Seth → Noah → Shem → Abraham → Isaac → Jacob → 12 Tribes of Israel → Judah → David → Solomon → Kings of Judah → Zerubbabel...

The prophet EZEKIEL sees God's presence leave the temple (Ezek 10)

- The exile motif is associated with removal from God's presence.
- God is GRACIOUS and slow to anger, but in 586 BC His judgment finally comes.

The curses of the Mosaic covenant come upon Judah:

- In 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar takes the people of Judah into exile to Babylon (2 Chron 36)
- The Babylonian king kills many, destroys Jerusalem and the temple.
- The last king Zedekiah is blinded and brought to Babylon. His sons are murdered.
- Gedaliah is governor in Jerusalem. Only the poor remain (Jer 40-42).
- **Jeremiah** laments over the destruction of Jerusalem (Lamentations).
- Amidst utter despair, Jeremiah has Hope in God's unfailing mercy: "Great is Your faithfulness." (See Lam 3:21-25)
- **Obadiah**: God will judge Edom.

The prophets announce restoration after the exile; God promises to:

- Bring Israel back to the land and multiply them
- Make a new covenant — it cannot be broken
- Put His law in their heart
- Give Israel a new heart and spirit
- Cleanse and forgive Israel's sin
- Raise up a righteous DAVIDIC KING
- Pour out His Spirit on all flesh
- Jerusalem and the temple will be rebuilt

The prophet Daniel works in Nebuchadnezzar's court in Babylon.

- Daniel interprets dreams.
- Four kingdoms (“beasts”) will rise and fall, but God will establish His everlasting kingdom.
 - Babylonia
 - Persia
 - Greece
 - Rome

Discussion¹

- 1) Exile is a recurring motif throughout the Scriptures that pictures humanity's separation from being "at home" in the presence of God. Babylon becomes the archetype of human pride and avarice in which God's people find themselves exiled. Consider the picture of Babylon in **Genesis 11:4** and compare it with God's invitation to Abram to leave the land of Babylon and enter the promised land in **Genesis 12:1-3**. What contrasts do you notice between these two passages? How would God's call to Abram have given hope to God's people exiled in the Babylonian Empire?
- 2) Though Abraham's family, the Israelites, entered the homeland God promised, they failed to trust God and were exiled. But even in their exile, God made a way for them to return home. Consider how **Deuteronomy 30:1-6** prophesies this return. What does this say about God's character and the nature of his promises?
- 3) Jesus is the way back home for all humanity. Jesus invites us back into God's presence and the Eden ideal. Read **John 14:1-6** and **14:16-23**. Based on this passage, how does Jesus make a way for us to be at home in God while we live on Earth? How does Jesus make a way for God to be at home within us?
- 4) In **1 Peter 2:11-12**, Peter picks up on the exile motif to describe the lives of believers who live as strangers in a sin-cursed world, awaiting the arrival of our king and final restoration of all things. Why is this understanding of ourselves as exiles in this present world and citizens of better country to come important? What are the similarities and differences between this exile and the exile faced by the Israelites?

¹ Some discussion questions adapted from www.bibleproject.com.