

# CASKET EMPTY:

## *God's Plan of Redemption through History*

### Old Testament Overview

#### Session 6 - Temple

*Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, some Psalms*



**Approximate Dates: 539-430 BC**

#### Tracing the Lineage

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

#### 539 BC - Cyrus (Persian Empire)

- Defeats Babylon (“writing on the wall,” Dan. 5)
- Decree of Cyrus allows the Israelites to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the ruined temple.
- 538 BC - 1st Return Under Sheshbazzar, governor of Judah.
- Temple building begins under Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest, but there is opposition.
- 520 BC - Haggai: “Build God’s house!”
- Temple building resumes. (under Darius, 522-486 BC)

#### 520-500 BC - Zechariah has visions.

- *A royal “branch” (of David)* will build God’s temple.
- God will dwell in the midst of his people.
- The *King* is coming with salvation — mounted on a donkey.
- Jerusalem will be a blessing to all the nations.

## **516 BC - The temple is rebuilt, but there is no evidence of God's glorious return.**

- Xerxes I, King of Persia (486-465); Esther, queen at Susa.
- 458 BC - 2nd return from exile during the reign of Artaxerxes I (465-424)
  - Ezra, scribe and Zadokite priest, returns to Jerusalem.
  - Reading of the law, confession, and covenant renewal (Ezra 9-10)
- 445 BC - Nehemiah, cupbearer of Artaxerxes I, rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem.
- Prayer and covenant renewal, but people still sin.

### **Malachi (the last OT prophet):**

- The Lord's coming has been delayed due to the sin of the people.
- The Lord will return to His temple, but a prophet like Elijah will come first to prepare his way, then he will come. (See Malachi 4:5-6)

## **Discussion**

- 1) Read *John 1:1-2, 14* and *John 2:18-21*. Who did John understand Jesus to be? What did Jesus mean by referring to himself as the temple? What do these passages teach us about the presence of God coming in the person of Jesus?
- 2) At the beginning of *Acts*, the Spirit indwells the people of God and empowers them for the mission of carrying the good news of Jesus to the ends of the earth. How does the indwelling presence of God through the Spirit in the lives of believers connect to some of the expectations we have seen in the Old Testament?
- 3) Read *Ephesians 2:19-22*. What does Paul mean by referring to the Christian community as the "household of God" growing into a "holy temple in the Lord"? Keep in mind the understanding and importance of the Temple in the Old Testament as you consider this text.