Return from Exile
Studies in Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

The Return to Jerusalem
Ezra 1-3
Lesson 1

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
September 5, 2010
The Old Testament Appendix

- 3 history books
  Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

- 3 prophets
  Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
The Divine Plan: Salvation

- Genesis 3:15 – the Seed of the woman
- Genesis 12:1-3, 7 – Abrahamic Promise
  - Blessing – salvation
  - A Great Nation – Israel
  - Blessing/salvation for the Gentiles through Israel
  - The Seed of the woman is the Seed of Abraham
- 1 Samuel 7 – Davidic Promise
  - Eternal Davidic dynasty
Is Israel a failed experiment?

- Israel is a total disaster and rejected by God
- In Ezra’s day: no *GREAT* nation – no nation!
- Man’s depravity v. God’s Promise
- Why bring Israel back into the Promised Land?
- Do we expect a different outcome here?
The Old Testament Appendix

- No surprises – not a pretty picture of Israel
- Ezra and Nehemiah – no change in the people
- Esther – a people without God
- A temple without glory
Malachi – God does not change
Haggai – a greater glory for this temple
Zechariah – the Priest/King is coming
The Grace of God on display
Rejoice, your King comes . . .
Preparation for Messiah

More than an Appendix
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<td>went up, Jerusalem, decree, house of the Lord, Law of the Lord</td>
<td>6:21-22; 2:1; 7:10</td>
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The Decree of Cyrus

▶ The sovereignty of God

▶ The Word of God
  – Isaiah 39:6-7 (Babylonian captivity)
  – Isaiah 44:28-45:7, 13 (Cyrus to deliver)
  – Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10-12 (70 years)
  – A type of a yet future return

▶ A partial fulfillment
  – Jeremiah 29:14; 30:18-21 – restored from all nations
  – Jeremiah 30:8-9 – a King
  – Jeremiah 30:18 – a rebuilt palace
  – Isaiah 45:14; 49:22-23 – a dominion over the nations
The Decree of Cyrus

- A political decision
- An unbeliever
- Proverbs 21:1 – The king’s heart in God’s hand
The decree goes into effect

- The sovereignty of God over His people
- Judah, Benjamin, Priests, Levites
- Gifts from neighbors
- Cyrus releases Temple articles
- Sheshbazzar – “prince of Judah”
The exiles return – Ezra 2

- Nehemiah 7:6-73
- “Each to his own town”
- Priest, Levites
- Temple servants, sons of Solomon’s servants
- Undocumented emigrants
- A small remnant
  - Some gave offerings for the house of the LORD
  - The rest of Israel in their towns
Rebuilding – Ezra 3

› The altar of the LORD
› The Feast of Booths
› The temple foundation
› The celebration – cheers and tears
My Father’s world

This is my Father's world,
O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world:
The battle is not done;
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and heav'n be one.