

Series "Fixed On 66"
"Ezra"
Book-15

Key Passage – Ezra 1:3; Ezra 7:10

The Author – Believed to be **Ezra**, though it never names him as the author. **Ezra 7-9** is written in the first person. The book is written from a priestly point of view.

Ezra - means "*help*" Ezra was a Priest, Scribe, and Leader.

The books of **Ezra** and **Nehemiah** were one book in the Hebrew Scriptures-

Books of **Esther, Ezra, & Nehemiah** compose the Post Captivity & **Historical books**

Post-captivity **Prophetic books** are **Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.**

Ezra leads the second return of the exiles to Jerusalem – **Ezra 7:14-26**

Ezra 7:6, 9-10

Ezra Hated Sin: Ezra 9:3

Ezra Was Humble: Ezra 9:6

Ezra Was A Man Of Prayer: Ezra 10:1

When Written – Ezra 1-6 538-516 Covers 22 years

Ezra 7-10 458-457 Covers 1 year

606-605 BC Babylon begins invading and deporting people

587 BC Jerusalem falls to the enemy

539 BC Babylon falls to Cyrus, and the Media-Persian empire begins

538 BC Cyrus permits the Jews to return; about 50,000 returns

535 BC The Jews begin to rebuild the temple, but the work stops

520 BC After fifteen years, the work begins again

515 BC The temple is completed and dedicated

476 BC Esther becomes Queen of Persia

458 BC Ezra travels to Jerusalem (Ezra 7-10)

Where It Was Written – We don't know for sure, but the locations of events are Babylon and Jerusalem.

Purpose – God's promise to Israel, to return to the land, is fulfilled thru Ezra 70 years later. Only a remnant chooses to leave Babylon. Ezra leads the Second Immigration to Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 29:14

Ezra 1-6 The first return of the exiles is led by Zerubbabel – The people start to rebuild the Temple.

Ezra 7-10 The second group that returns to the Lord is led by Ezra. Between these two accounts is a period of 60 years in which Esther rules as queen of Persia.

Haggai and **Zechariah** should be studied together with **Ezra**. They were involved with the reconstruction of the Temple.

Theme – *"National and Spiritual Restoration" (Ezra - Rebuilding the Temple, Nehemiah - Rebuilding the Walls)*

Key Words – Temple is used 29 times

Key Chapter – **Ezra 6** This is the completion and dedication of the temple, which motivates the people to obey the Lord, keep the Passover, and separate themselves from the surrounding nations.

Key Passage – **Ezra 1:3; Ezra 7:10**

Outline:

- 1. Ezra 1-6 National Restoration Under Zerubbabel**
- 2. Ezra 7-10 Spiritual Reformation Under Ezra**

1. Ezra 1-6 National Restoration Under Zerubbabel:

Ezra 1-2 Returning To The Land: Cyrus King of Persia asked for volunteers to go back and build the house of God: 2 Chron 36:22-23

Ezra 1:1-3 Cyrus' Proclamation, "Return and Rebuild": Ezra 1:1
Nebuchadnezzar had taken Judah captive for 70 years.
Babylon is overthrown by Persia

God said 70 years - **Jeremiah 25:11-12**

Ezra 1:2-3

Many would not go, but a few did:

1. The Jews had become wealthy
2. The Jews were secure
3. The Jews had businesses
4. It took four months to get there

Ezra 1:5-11 The Vessels For The Temple Returned/Replaced: Ezra 1:5-8

Ezra 2:1-35 The Numbers of Returning People: Ezra 2:1

Ezra 2:36-39 The Returning Priests:

Ezra 2:40-60 The Returning Levites:

Ezra 2:61-63 Priests Removed: Ezra 2:61-63

Ezra 3:1-7 The Alter And Sacrifice: Ezra 3:1-3

Ezra 3:6

Rebuilding The Temple: Ezra 3:10-13

A bittersweet gathering.

Ezra 4-6 Resisting The Enemy:

Ezra 4:1-3 Compromise Of The Enemy: Ezra 4:1-3

These people were the **Samaritans**, a mixture of both Jews and Gentiles. This is not racial, skin color, or physical features. It was spiritual (Believer Verses Unbeliever) **2 Kings 17 John 4:20-24**, Jesus clearly rejected Samaritan religion.

Ezra 4:4-5 Interference of The Enemy: Ezra 4:4-5

Ezra 4:24 For nearly fifteen years (534-520), the work ceased on the temple.

Note: Ezra 4:6-23 A Parenthesis Describing Opposition At A Later Date: Ezra 4:6-7

Ezra 5 Resuming The Work: Ezra 5:1-2

Fifteen years go by between chapters 4 and 5. It is not until the Word of God is proclaimed by the two prophets, **Haggai** and **Zechariah**, that the work of the temple begins again. **Ezra 5:5**

Ezra 6:1-12 Memorandum Let God's People Build: Ezra 6:11-12

Ezra 6:13-18 Temple Completed and Dedicated: Ezra 6:15-18

Ezra 6:19-22 The Passover Observed:

The Passover was the "Great Divide" for Israel. It was the God of Israel that had delivered them from death thru the blood of a lamb.

2. Ezra 7-10 Spiritual Reformation Under Ezra:

Ezra 7-8 Ezra Comes To Jerusalem: Ezra 7:6-9

It took Ezra four months to journey nearly a thousand miles from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD, This is where it must start to commit to study and know the Scriptures. **(Heart)**

and to practice it, Doers of the Word! What good is knowledge if it does not lead to practice? Doctrine leads to duty! **(Actions)**

and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel. **(Outflow-Ministry)** Note that the heart and actions lead to ministry.

Ezra 7:11-26 The Kings Decree For Ezra: Ezra 7:11

Ezra's Doxology (Giving Thanks): Ezra 7:27-28

Ezra 8:1-14 People That Went With Ezra:

Ezra 8:15-20 Ezra Drafts The Levites: It was important that the Levites go along because it was their duty to study the Word and teach it to the people.

Ezra's Fast And Trust In God: Ezra 8:21-23

Ezra 9 Ezra Confesses The Sins Of The People: Ezra 9:1

No sooner had a teacher of the Word arrived then the Word began to reveal sin (Hebrews 4:12)

Ezra 9:2-3

Nehemiah 13:25

Ezra 9:4

Ezra 9:5-15 Ezra's Prayer of Confession: Daniel 9, Nehemiah 9, and now **Ezra 9** Are the great prayers of confession.

Ezra 10 Ezra Cleanses The Nation: Ezra 10:1

Ezra 10:18-44 Ezra states that **17 priests, 10 Levites, and 87 other men** were found guilty of marrying heathen wives.

How long did this reformation last? About twenty-five years later

Application:

1. God Promised Captivity To His Sinning Nation, And He Fulfilled His Promise By Giving Israel Seventy Years.
2. God Promised That A Remnant Would Return From Captivity. (Jeremiah 25:12-14; 29:10-14). It Was Jeremiah's Prophecy That Daniel Read In Babylon That Encouraged Him To Pray For The Return Of The People. (Daniel 9:1)
3. God Kept A "Lamp Lit" At Jerusalem In Order That His Son Might Be Born Through The Hebrew Nation And Come To Save The World.
4. Israel's Captivity Cured The Jews Of Idolatry And Gave Them The Desire To Know And Obey His Word. Sadly, They Forgot Their Lessons Quickly.