

# **Old Testament Historical Books (OT5)**

## **Ezra-Nehemiah**

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Lakeside institute of Theology

# Old Testament Historical Books (OT5)

1. Introduction; Book of Joshua: Conquest and Partition of the Land
2. Judges & Ruth: Moral Crisis
3. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel: The United Kingdom; David the Great King
4. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings: Solomon; Division and Destruction
5. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles: Sacred History Retold
6. Ezra & Nehemiah: Rebuilding
7. Esther; Final Exam

# THE STRUCTURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT



Law/History (5+12)

GENESIS  
EXODUS  
LEVITICUS  
NUMBERS  
DEUTERONOMY

Wisdom ( 5 )

JOB  
PSALMS  
PROVERBS  
ECCLESIASTES  
SONG OF SOLOMON

Prophets ( 5+12 )

ISAIAH  
JEREMIAH  
LAMENTATIONS  
EZEKIEL  
DANIEL

JOSHUA  
JUDGES  
RUTH  
1 SAMUEL  
2 SAMUEL  
1 KINGS  
2 KINGS  
1 CHRONICLES  
2 CHRONICLES  
EZRA  
NEHEMIAH  
ESTHER

Number of books  
in the  
Old Testament:

39

Number of books  
in the  
New Testament:

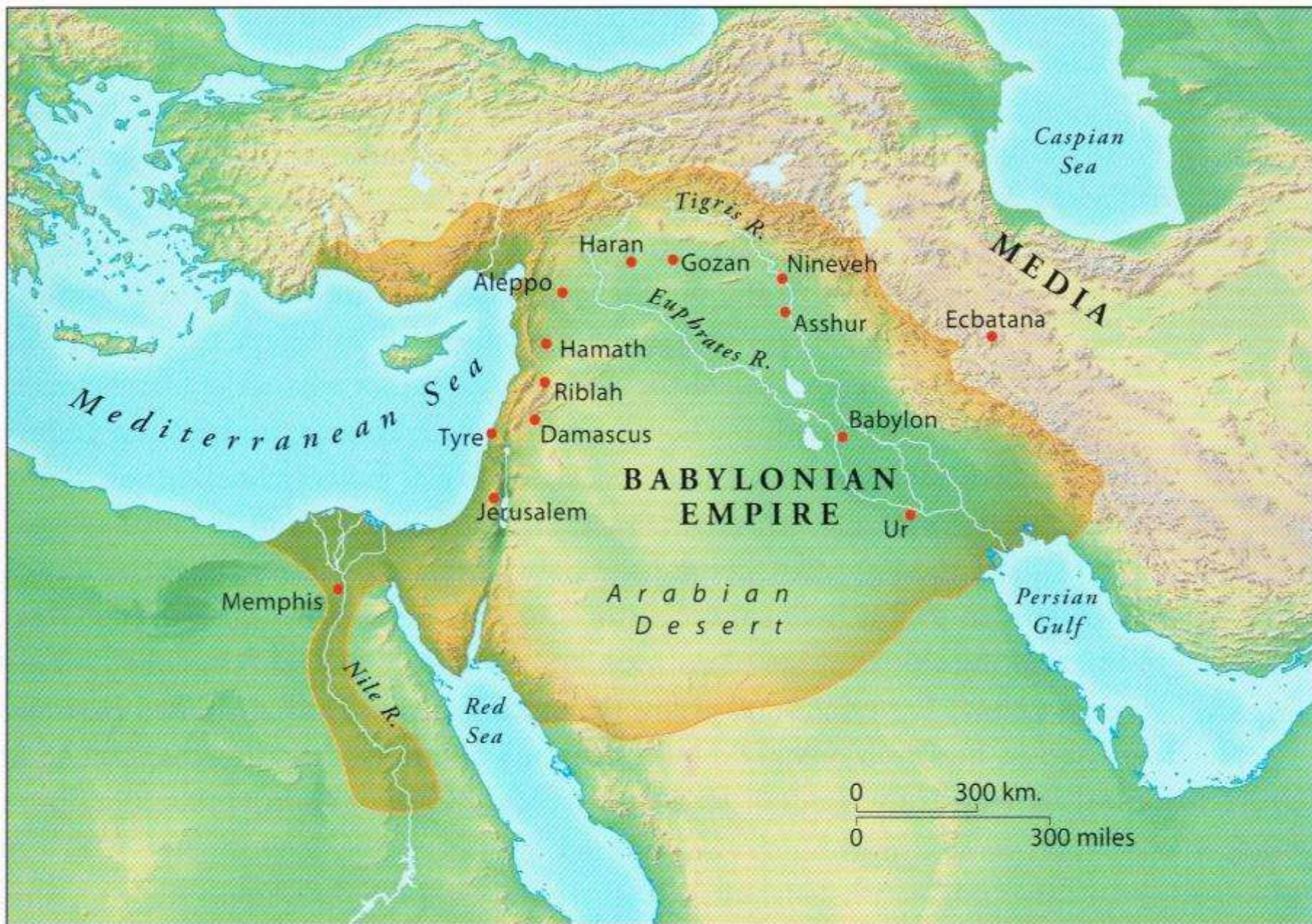
27

Number of books  
in the Bible:

66

HOSEA  
JOEL  
AMOS  
OBADIAH  
JONAH  
MICAH  
NAHUM  
HABAKKUK  
ZEPHANIAH  
HAGGAI  
ZECHARIAH  
MALACHI



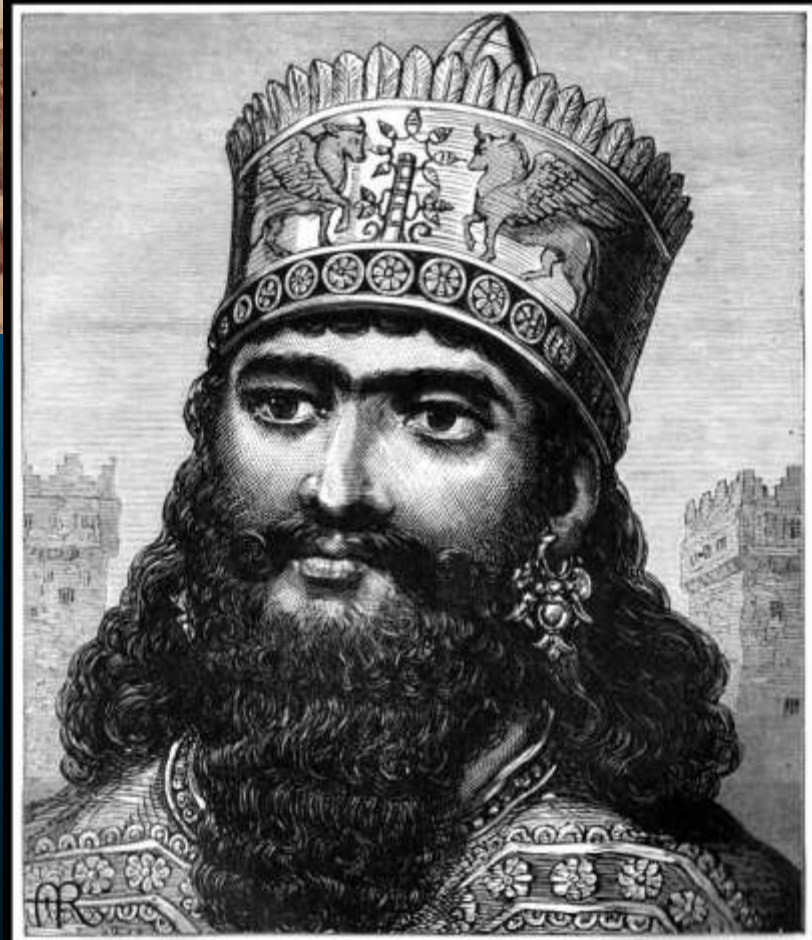


The Babylonian Empire in 586 BC.



# The Babylonian Deportations of Judah

- **605 BC** – Babylonians defeat Egyptians at Battle of Carchemish and take control of Judah, deporting some Jews to Babylon – including Daniel and his friends Hananiah, Mishael & Azariah.
- **599-97 BC** – Pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem revolts against Babylonian rule, leading to siege and pillaging of Jerusalem and deportation of King Jehoiachin & his court, including Prophet Ezekiel.
- **587-86 BC** – King Zedekiah revolts against Babylonians by allying with Egypt, leading to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple & city walls.
- **582 BC** – Final deportation, in response to assassination of appointed governor Gedaliah & his Babylonian advisors.



BABYLONIAN KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Babylonia King Nebuchadnezzar destroys the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586 BC, burning Jerusalem and the Temple.

# How the Babylonian Exile Affected the Jews

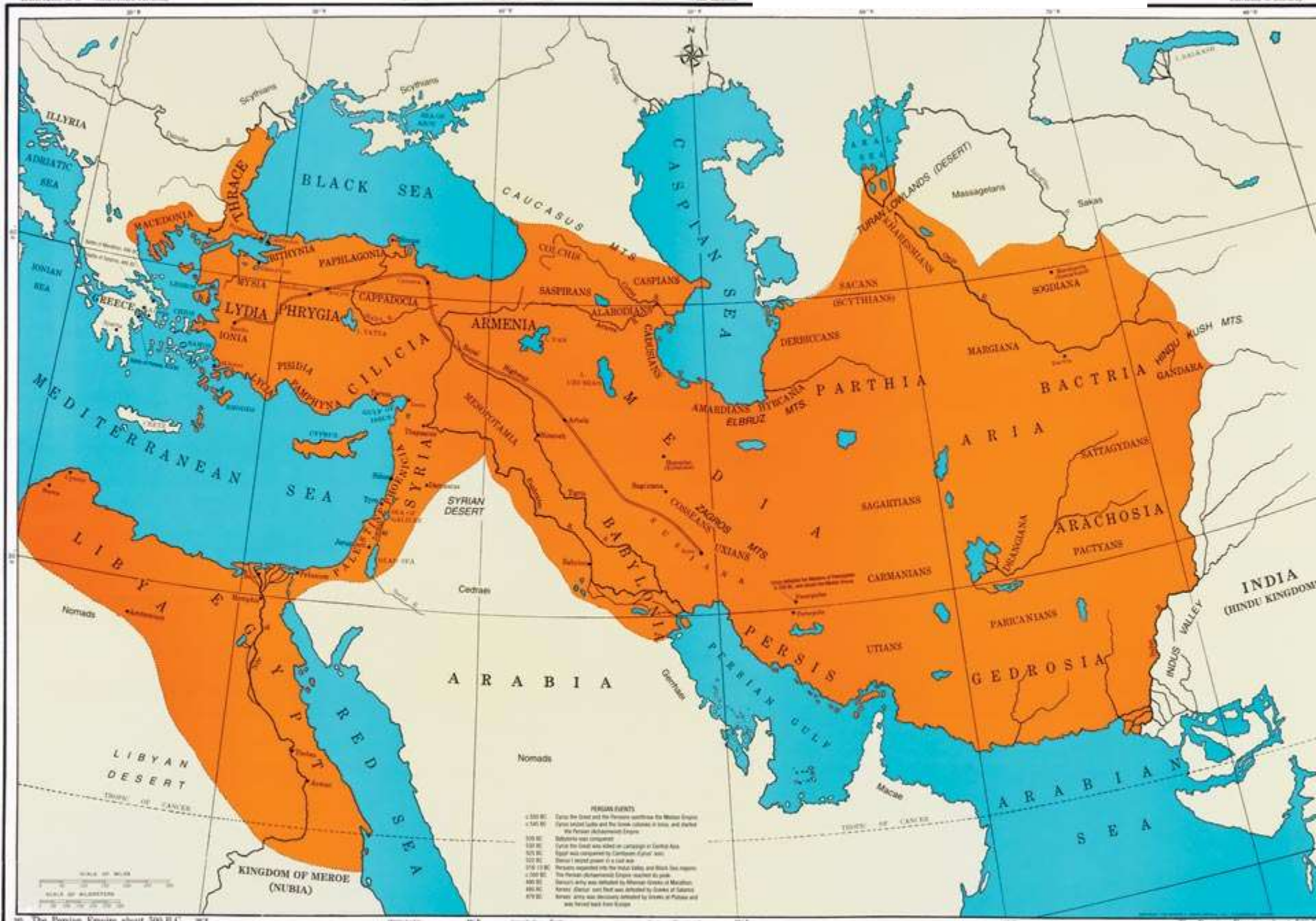
- They were left wondering if God still loved them and if they were still His special people.
- They were unsure how to be the people of God when the things that had most represented their election as God's people – the Promised Land and the Temple – had been taken away or destroyed.
- They did not know how to worship without a Temple.
- They were fearful of being assimilated and losing their uniqueness as a people – as had happened to the tribes in the Northern Kingdom of Israel when Assyrian had conquered them 136 years earlier.



# THE PERSIAN EMPIRE 550-330 BC

Thomas D. Clark, Ph.D., Professor of  
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ORIGINAL EDITORS  
Bella Milton Brown, Ph.D., University of Chicago  
Arthur Gay Terry, Ph.D., Northwestern University  
Clayton L. Kopp, Ph.D., Northwestern University  
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# The Jews Return from Babylonian Captivity

- **539 BC** – Babylonians are conquered by the Persians under Cyrus the Great, who issues a decree allowing captive people to return home, and for the Jews to rebuild the Temple.
- **538 BC** – 1st Jews return under Zerubbabel, restore the altar and foundations of the Temple.
- **525 BC** – Work on the Temple halts because of local opposition.
- **515 BC** – Temple rebuilding completed in sixth year of Persian King Darius I.
- **458 BC** – Ezra leads second return of exiles to Jerusalem, begins teaching the Law.
- **445 BC** – Nehemiah, cupbearer to Artaxerxes I returns to Jerusalem and rebuilds the city walls.
- **334 BC** – Alexander the Great conquers Persia.



# Kings of the Old Testament

## Old Testament Time Line

BC

1050-  
1010

1010-  
970

970-  
930

United  
Kingdom

Saul

David

Solomon

South  
(Judah)

Divided  
Kingdom

North  
(Israel)

930-  
910

Rehoboam  
Abijam

**Prophets** ↓

Jeroboam  
Nadab

910-  
850

Asha\*  
Jehoshaphat\*  
Jehoram

Baasha  
Elah, Omri  
Ahab

850-  
800

Ahaziah  
Athaliah  
Joash\*

**Joel**

Joram  
Jehu  
Jehoahaz

800-  
750

Amaziah\*  
Uzziah\*  
(Azariah)

**Jonah, Amos  
Hosea  
Isaiah**

Jehoash  
Jeroboam II  
Zechariah

750-  
700

Jotham\*  
Ahaz  
Hezekiah\*

**Micah**

Menahem  
Pekah  
Hoshea

700-  
650

Manasseh

**Nahum**

In 722 BC  
Israel falls to  
Assyria.

650-  
600

Amos  
Josiah\*  
Jehoiakim

**Habakkuk  
Zephaniah  
Jeremiah**

600-  
586

Zedekiah

**Obadiah**

Judah is carried  
off to Babylon.  
In 586 BC,  
Jerusalem and  
the Temple  
are destroyed.

**Daniel  
Ezekiel**

Leaders

537?

Zerubbabel

**Haggai  
Zechariah**

458-

Ezra

**Malachi**

445-

Nehemiah

\*Good Kings of the Divided Kingdom  
(Only major kings noted here. Listed by first date of  
each king's or prophet's influence.)

# The Book of Ezra

- Author: Ezra
- Date: c. 538 BC - 438 BC
- Theme: Return & Rebuilding of the Temple
- Purpose: To show God is faithful to the Remnant.
- Outline:
  - \*The Exiles Return (*chs.1-2*)
  - \*Rebuilding the Temple (*chs.3-6*)
  - \*Ministry of Ezra (*chs.7-10*)



# The Book of Ezra

- Major Parallels in World History
  - Ezra: 538 – 438 BC
  - 539 BC – on October 12, Cyrus the Great of Persia conquers Babylonia
  - 538 BC – King Cyrus decrees Jews in captive Babylonia may return to Jerusalem.
  - 528 BC – Gautama Buddha achieves enlightenment in India.
  - 515 BC – Jerusalem Temple rebuilt by returning exiles.
  - 490 BC – Greeks defeat Persians in Battle of Marathon.
  - 447-432 BC – The Parthenon Temple to Athena is built in Athens.

# Outline of Ezra-Nehemiah

## I. First Return from Exile & Temple Rebuilt (*chs. 1-6*)

### A. First return of the exiles (*ch. 1*)

1. The Edict of Cyrus the Great (*1:1-4*)
2. The return under Sheshbazar/Zerubbabel (*1:5-11*)

### B. List of the returning exiles (*ch. 2*)

### C. Revival of Temple worship (*ch. 3*)

1. Rebuilding of the altar (*3:1-3*)
2. Festival of Tabernacles (*3:4-6*)
3. Beginning of Temple reconstruction (*3:7-13*)

### D. Opposition to the building (*4:1-23*)

1. Opposition during the reign of Cyrus (*4:1-5*)
2. Opposition during the reign of Xerxes (*4:6*)
3. Opposition during the reign of Artaxerxes (*4:7-23*)

### E. Completion of the Temple (*4:24-6:22*)

1. Resumption of work under Darius (*4:24*)
2. A new beginning inspired by Haggai & Zechariah (*5:1-2*)
3. Intervention of Governor Tattenai (*5:3-5*)
4. Report to Darius (*5:6-17*)
5. Search for the decree of Cyrus (*6:1-6*)
6. Darius' orders for rebuilding the Temple (*6:6-12*)



# Outline of Ezra-Nehemiah

7. Completion of the Temple (6:13-15)
8. Dedication of the Temple (6:16-18)
9. Celebration of Passover (6:19-22)

## II. Ezra's Return and Reforms (*chs.7-10*)

### A. Ezra's return to Jerusalem (*chs.7-8*)

1. Introduction (7:1-10)
2. Authorization by Artaxerxes (7:11-26)
3. Ezra's doxology (7:27-28)
4. List of those returning with Ezra (8:1-14)
5. The search for Levites (8:15-20)
6. Prayer and fasting (8:21-23)
7. Assignment of the sacred articles (8:24-30)
8. The journey and arrival in Jerusalem (8:31-36)

### B. Ezra's Reforms (*chs.9-10*)

1. The offense of mixed marriages (9:1-5)
2. Ezra's confession and prayer (9:6-15)
3. The people's response (10:1-4)
4. Calling of a public assembly (10:5-15)
5. Investigation of the offenders (10:16-17)
6. The list of offenders (10:18-43)
7. The dissolution of mixed marriages (10:44)

# **The Book of Ezra**

## **Key Verses**

**When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the LORD, as prescribed by David king of Israel. <sup>11</sup>With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: "He is good; his love to Israel endures forever." And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.**

**Ezra 3:10-11**

**After these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah... <sup>6</sup>this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.**

**Ezra 7:1,6**

# The Book of Nehemiah

- Author: Ezra/Nehemiah
- Date: c. 445 BC - 420 BC
- Theme: Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem
- Purpose: To show God is faithful to the Remnant.
- Outline:
  - \*Nehemiah Returns (1-2)
  - \*Rebuilding the Walls (3)
  - \*Threats and Persecution (4-7)
  - \*Renewal of Covenant (8-10)
  - \*Dedication and Laws (11-13)



# The Book of Nehemiah

- Major Parallels in World History
  - Nehemiah: 445 – 420 BC
  - 445 BC – Nehemiah, butler to Persian King Artaxerxes I, is appointed governor of Jerusalem and told to rebuild the walls of the city.
  - 445 BC – The walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt in only 52 days.
  - 431-404 BC – The Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta.
  - 399 BC – Socrates is executed in Athens.

# The Book of Nehemiah

## Key Verses

Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." <sup>4</sup> When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Nehemiah 1:2-4

So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. <sup>16</sup>When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God. Nehemiah 6:15-16

# Outline of Ezra-Nehemiah

## I. Nehemiah's First Administration (*chs. 1-12*)

### A. Nehemiah's response to the situation in Jerusalem (*ch. 1*)

1. News of the plight of Jerusalem (*1:1-4*)
2. Nehemiah's prayer (*1:5-11*)

### B. Nehemiah's journey to Jerusalem (*2:1-10*)

1. The king's permission (*2:1-8*)
2. The journey itself (*2:9-10*)

### C. Nehemiah's actions on arrival in Jerusalem (*2:11-20*)

1. Nighttime inspection of the walls (*2:11-16*)
2. Exhortation to rebuild (*2:17-18*)
3. His response to opposition (*2:19-20*)

### D. List of the builders of the wall (*ch. 3*)

1. The northern section (*3:1-7*)
2. The western section (*3:8-13*)
3. The southern section (*3:14*)
4. The eastern section (*3:15-32*)

### E. Opposition to rebuilding the wall (*ch. 4*)

1. The derision of Sanballat and Tobiah (*4:1-5*)
2. The threat of attack (*4:6-15*)
3. Rebuilding the wall (*4:16-23*)



# Outline of Ezra-Nehemiah

## F. Social and Economic Problems (*ch.5*)

1. The complaints of the poor (*5:1-5*)
2. The cancellation of debts (*5:6-13*)
3. Nehemiah's unselfish example (*5:14-19*)

## G. The wall rebuilt despite opposition (*ch.6*)

1. Attempts to snare Nehemiah (*6:1-9*)
2. The hiring of false prophets (*6:10-14*)
3. The completion of the wall (*6:15-19*)

## H. List of exiles (*7:1-73a*)

1. Provisions for the protection of Jerusalem (*7:1-3*)
2. Nehemiah discovers the list of returnees (*7:4-5*)
3. The returnees delineated (*7:6-72*)
4. Settlement of the exiles (*7:73a*)

## I. Ezra's preaching and outbreak of revival (*7:73b-10:39*)

1. Public explanation of the Scriptures (*7:73b-8:12*)
2. Festival of Tabernacles (*8:13-18*)
3. A day of fasting, confession and prayer (*9:1-37*)
4. A binding agreement (*9:38*)
5. A list of those who sealed the agreement (*10:1-29*)
6. Provisions of the agreement (*10:30-39*)

# Outline of Ezra-Nehemiah

- J. New residents of Judah and Jerusalem (*ch.11*)
  - 1. New residents for Jerusalem (*11:1-24*)
  - 2. New residents for Judah (*11:25-36*)
- K. Lists of priests and the dedication of the wall (*ch.12*)
  - 1. Priests and Levites from the first return (*12:1-9*)
  - 2. Dedication of the wall of Jerusalem (*12:10-26*)
  - 3. Regulations of Temple offerings and services (*12:44-47*)
- II. Nehemiah's Second Administration (*ch.13*)
  - A. Abuses during his absence (*13:1-5*)
    - 1. Mixed marriages (*13:1-3*)
    - 2. Tobiah's occupation of Temple quarters (*13:4-5*)
  - B. Nehemiah's return (*13:6-9*)
    - 1. His arrival (*13:6-7*)
    - 2. His expulsion of Tobiah (*13:8-9*)
  - C. Reorganization and reforms (*13:10-31*)
    - 1. Offerings for the Temple staff (*13:10-14*)
    - 2. Abuse of the Sabbath (*13:15-22*)
    - 3. Mixed marriages (*13:23-29*)
    - 4. Provisions of wood and firstfruits (*13:30-31*)

