



# EZRA

## BASIC INFO

-  **Author:** Ezra
-  **Date written:** ~450–400 BC
-  **Settings :** Babylon, Jerusalem

## MAIN CHARACTERS



EZRA



HAGGAI



ZERUBBABEL



CYRUS



JOSHUA






## KEY THEMES

- God's Faithfulness & Restoration** – The return from exile shows God's commitment to His promises.
- The Power of God's Word** – Ezra's reforms highlight the living power of God's Word, to bring spiritual renewal.
- Opposition & Perseverance** – Rebuilding the temple faces obstacles, but God ensures success.
- Spiritual Purity** – Ezra calls the people to separate from sin and obey God's laws.
- Worship & Obedience** – The restored temple emphasizes the importance of true worship

## SUMMARY

Ezra opens in Persia. After seventy years of exile King Cyrus feels stirred by God to let the Jewish people go home. Zerubbabel leads the first caravan back to ruined Jerusalem. They rebuild the altar for daily sacrifices and lay the temple foundation. Fearing a strong Judah, nearby nations spread rumors and bribe officials, so the work stops for years. Prophets Haggai and Zechariah speak courage, the builders lift their tools, and King Darius confirms the old decree. The temple is finished and dedicated with songs, offerings, and a joyful Passover. The story then jumps to the reign of Artaxerxes. Ezra, a priest and skilled teacher of the Law, receives a royal letter, silver, and authority to teach God's commands. He gathers more exiles and makes the four-month journey, fasting and praying for safe travel. In Jerusalem he discovers that leaders and many families have married pagan wives. Heartbroken, he tears his robe and falls on his knees, confessing the nation's sin. The people join him and agree to separate from practices that pull them from God. Across every chapter one theme stands out: the Lord steers kings, keeps promises, and gives strength by His grace to those who humbly obey, yet His people must guard holiness if they want His presence to remain.

## KEY VERSES

-  **Ezra 1:3** – “Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.” – Cyrus' decree allows the Jews to return.
-  **Ezra 3:11** – “And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.” – The people celebrate as they lay the temple's foundation.
-  **Ezra 7:10** – “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments” – Ezra's dedication to teaching God's Word.
-  **Ezra 10 : 4** – “Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.” - Take courageous action
-  **Ezra 10:11** – “Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.” – A call for repentance and obedience

## JESUS IN THIS BOOK

Ezra returns from exile to teach God's Law and restore true worship, pointing to Jesus the perfect Teacher who “opens the Scriptures.” Ezra leads the people in confession and renewal; Christ brings the fuller covenant, writing the Law on hearts. The rebuilt altar and temple foundations hint at Jesus, the true sacrifice and cornerstone of a living temple—the Church. By guiding a remnant back to Jerusalem, Ezra foreshadows Christ gathering a people from every nation and leading them home to God

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Ezra shows that spiritual renewal begins when a community gathers around God's revealed Word and responds in obedient worship. Just as post-exilic Israel rebuilt the altar and temple and purified their lives, we are called to renew our relationship with God through heartfelt repentance, Confession, persevering prayer, and an active pursuit of purity of heart, trusting in His mercy that cleanses us. The book also reminds us to persevere in faith despite opposition and to rest securely in God's sovereign plan

## HISTORY

## OLD TESTAMENT

**1** | THE DECREE OF CYRUS

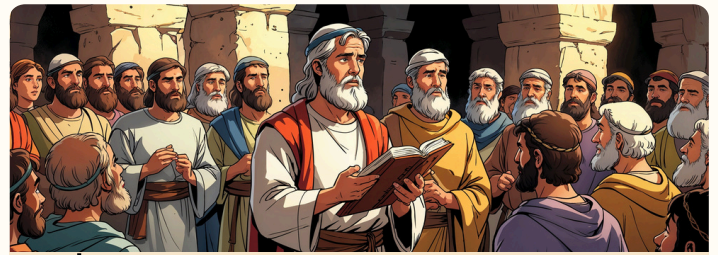
EZRA 1-2

**2** | REBUILDING THE ALTAR

EZRA 3

**3** | DELAYS IN CONSTRUCTION

EZRA 4-6

**4** | TEACHING OF THE LAW

EZRA 7-8

**5** | NATIONAL REPENTANCE

EZRA 9

**6** | COVENANT RENEWAL

EZRA 10

**1 | The Decree of Cyrus (Ezra 1-2)**

King Cyrus issues a decree allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. Many respond, gathering supplies, treasures, and offerings for God's house. Leaders, priests, and Levites prepare for the long journey back to their homeland.

**2 | Rebuilding the Altar (Ezra 3)**

Upon arrival, the Jews rebuild the altar and resume sacrifices, seeking God's favor and restoring their covenant relationship with Him. They then lay the foundation of the temple, leading to a mix of joyful celebration and weeping from those who remembered the former temple's glory.

**3 | Delays in Construction (Ezra 4-6)**

Enemies of Judah interfere, halting temple construction through political schemes. The work remains stalled for years until the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encourage the people. Through God's intervention and a decree from King Darius, the temple is finally completed and dedicated.

**4 | Teaching of the Law (Ezra 7-8)**

Ezra, a priest and scribe, leads a second group of exiles back to Jerusalem. He brings Levites, temple offerings, and treasures. His mission is to teach God's Law, calling the people to repentance and ensuring they return to faithful obedience according to His commands.

**5 | National Repentance (Ezra 9)**

Ezra is devastated upon learning that many Israelites have intermarried with pagan nations, leading them into disobedience and sin. He falls in prayer, confessing the nation's sins, recognizing God's mercy, and calling the people to repentance with humility and urgency.

**6 | Covenant Renewal & Purification (Ezra 10)**

Convicted by Ezra's prayer, the people publicly confess their sins and take decisive action to restore purity before God, returning to faithful obedience. They separate from foreign influences and renew their covenant with God, reaffirming their commitment to His holy commandments.