

## Ezra, Nehemiah

<input type="checkbox"/>	February 26	<b>Ezr 1-2</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	February 27	<b>Ezr 3:1-6</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	February 28	<b>Ezr 3:7-4:24</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	February 29	<b>Ezr 5:1-7:10</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 1	<b>Ezr 7:11-8:14</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 4	<b>Ezr 8:15-10:17</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 5	<b>Ezr 10:18-44</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 6	<b>Neh 1-3</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 7	<b>Neh 4</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 8	<b>Neh 5:1-6:15</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 11	<b>Neh 6:16-7:73</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 12	<b>Neh 8</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 13	<b>Neh 9</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 14	<b>Neh 10</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 15	<b>Neh 11</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 18	<b>Neh 12:1-26</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	March 19	<b>Neh 12:27-13:31</b>

# Ezra-Nehemiah



## Content and Structure

The book of Ezra chronicles two major events while Nehemiah four:

1. **Zerubbabel**—group returns to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1-6)
2. **Ezra**—public teaching ministry (Ezra 7-10; Neh. 8-10)
3. **Nehemiah**—group returns to rebuild the city walls (Neh. 1-7)
4. **Revival**—need for Scripture, worship, confession, repentance, (Neh. 8-10)
5. **Records**—population and census info. (Neh. 11-12)
6. **Reformation**—separation, giving, Sabbath, marriage, priests (Neh. 13)

## Key Passages

[Ezra 1:1-6; 7:10]

**Ezra 1:3 (ESV)** Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem.

[Nehemiah 2:17-18; 8:5-9]

**Nehemiah 1:11 (ESV)** O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”

## Key Themes

Restoration, reformation, worship



## Ezra

- I. **Return from Exile (1–2)**
  - A. Proclamation of Permission (ch. 1)
  - B. List of Returnees (ch. 2)
- II. **Rebuilding of Cultus and Community (3–6)**
  - A. Preparation for Rebuilding (ch. 3)
  - B. Opposition to Rebuilding (ch. 4)
  - C. Continuation of Rebuilding (ch. 5)
  - D. Completion of Rebuilding (ch. 6)
- III. **Return of Ezra (7–8)**
  - A. Arrangements for His Return (ch. 7)
  - B. Entourage with his Return (ch. 8)
- IV. **Ministry of Ezra (9–10)**
  - A. Sin of the People (9:1–4)
  - B. Ezra’s Prayer for the People (9:5–15)
  - C. Ezra’s Leadership in Reformation (ch. 10)

## Nehemiah

- I. **Nehemiah’s Dilemma (1)**
  - A. Report of Jerusalem’s Condition (1:1–3)
  - B. Nehemiah’s Prayer (1:4–11)
- II. **Nehemiah’s Plan (2)**
  - A. His Request of the king (2:1–8)
  - B. His Return to Jerusalem and Plan to Rebuild (2:9–20)
- III. **Nehemiah’s Building (3–4)**
  - A. His Organization (ch. 3)
  - B. His Opposition (ch. 4)
- IV. **Nehemiah’s Domestic Reforms (5)**
- V. **Nehemiah’s Determination (6:1–7:4)**
- VI. **List of Returnees (7:5–73a)**
- VII. **Covenant Renewal (7:73b–10:39)**
  - A. Its Preparations (7:73b–9:4)
  - B. Its Proclamation (9:5–10:27)
  - C. Its Stipulations (10:28–39)
- VIII. **Rededication of Jerusalem (11:1–13:3)**
  - A. Lists of People and Priests (11:1–12:26)
  - B. Ceremony of Celebration (12:27–13:3)
- IX. **Return to Former Sins and Second Reformation (13:4–31)**

## Summary

Ezra and Nehemiah were actually one book in the ancient Hebrew and Greek OT. Though Philo and Jerome separated the two—a policy that became entrenched in the practice of the church—Judaism persisted in viewing the work as a unit until the advent of the printed Hebrew Bible in the early fifteenth century.

Each book contains materials found in the other (e.g., the list in Ezra 2 is also in Neh. 7). Each book completes the other; Ezra’s story is continued in Nehemiah (chaps. 8–10). They are the next chapter of the history recorded in Chronicles.

The overriding theological concern of Ezra–Nehemiah was for the restoration of the postexilic Jewish community to a position of covenant purity and faithfulness so that it might take up and perpetuate its God-given privilege and task of mediating his salvific intentions to the whole world. Despite its failure in doing so as a community, Ezra and Nehemiah helped establish the conditions that could prepare the way for the One who, in the fullness of time, brought to pass the hopes and dreams of these mighty reformers.

Ezra’s greatest contribution was his teaching, establishing, and implementing “the book of the law of the Lord” (Neh. 9:3) among the Jews. Ezra evidenced strong theology; he believed in the sovereignty of God, who could use a Cyrus, an Artaxerxes, and a Darius to accomplish His purposes. He believed in the faithfulness of God, who brought home the exiles who wanted to return. He believed in the sacredness and practicality of the Scriptures; he read them to his people and insisted that their teachings be carried out. He was a person of prayer; note his long confessional prayers (Ezra 9:5–15; Neh. 9:6–37). He was a preacher: he used a pulpit (Neh. 8:4); he publicly read the Scriptures; and he helped to interpret them to his congregation (8:8).

As for Nehemiah, he held the distinguished and trusted position of cupbearer to the king (Neh. 1:11). Visitors to Susa informed him of the dilapidation of Jerusalem’s walls. He was so upset that he cried and “mourned for days” (1:4); he prayed a confession (1:5–11). His grief became apparent to Artaxerxes who permitted him to go to Jerusalem.

He was a man of action; he got things done. He knew how to use persuasion but also force. He was an excellent leader who demonstrated engineering knowledge and brilliant organizing ability (chap. 3). Because of Nehemiah, Judaism had a fortified city, a purified people, a dedicated and unified nation, renewed economic stability, and a new commitment to God’s law.

### Ezra in the New Testament (1)

**Quotes** (0)

**Allusions** (0)

**Echoes** (1) Ezra 4:3 cf. John 4:9

### Nehemiah in the New Testament (3)

**Quotes** (0)

**Allusions** (1) Neh. 9:15 cf. John 6:31

**Echoes** (2) Neh. 9:17 cf. James 5:11;  
Neh. 9:36 cf. John 8:33