



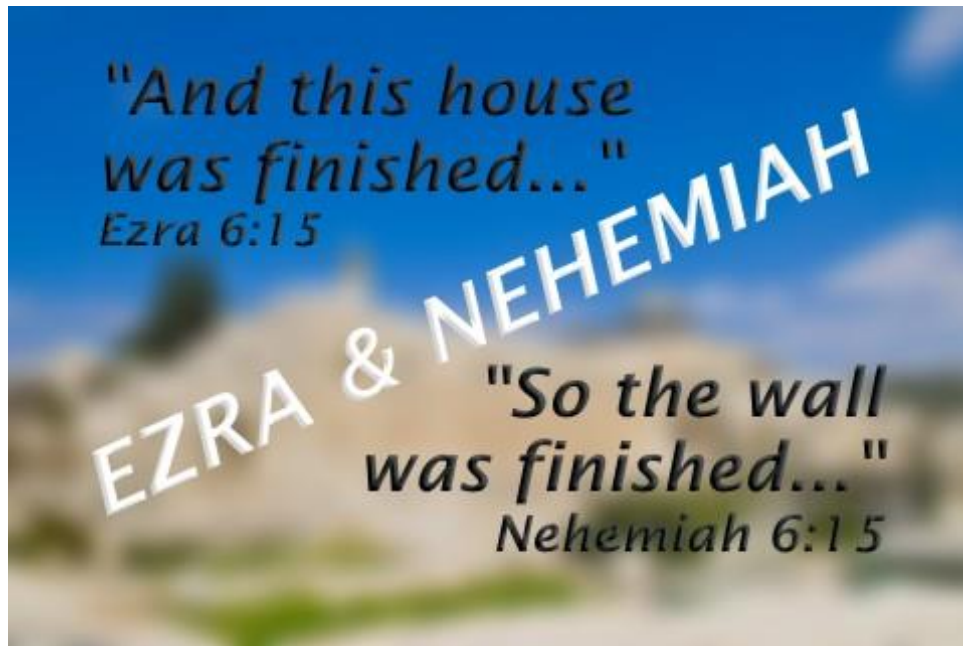
## My Drift

**Title:** Bible – The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah

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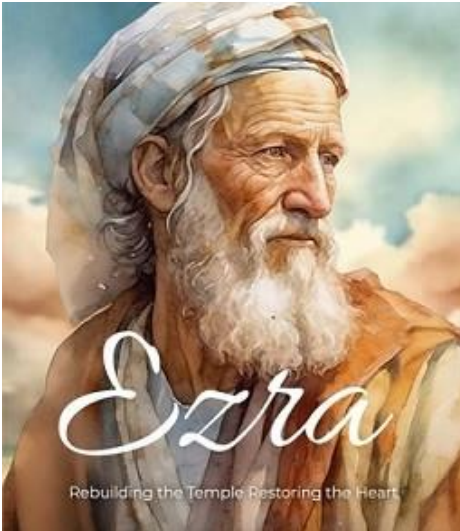
For the first time since I started this Bible study project, I'm combining two books – Ezra and Nehemiah.

### **The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah Overview**

During the time of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Bible and even the Book of Esther, we can find some very complex issues that were dealt with by the Hebrew people. The books in the Bible devoted to those historical events are named for these brave and mighty men and women. Since the history is so closely related, and even overlapped, this overview and summary of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah are offered together. In the Hebrew manuscripts you will find these two books recorded as one.

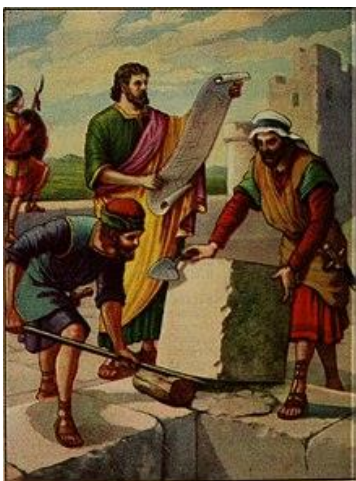
**Time Written:** Sometime after the fall of Babylon until the 2nd half of the 5th century. Most likely 538-432 B.C.

**Writers:** Part of the book of Ezra was written by Ezra who was a priest and a scribe (Ezra 7:1-6). The author or authors of the rest of the book of Ezra are unknown. The authors of Nehemiah are unknown, however it reads much like an autobiography of Nehemiah who was governor of Persian Judea and the cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2:1)



**Ezra the Teacher**

**Main Theme of the Book of Ezra:** The return of the Jews from captivity in Babylon and the rebuilding of the temple. Ezra is also responsible for leading the Jews back to proper behavior and worship of the God of Israel, though this is not really completed until the last chapter of Nehemiah.

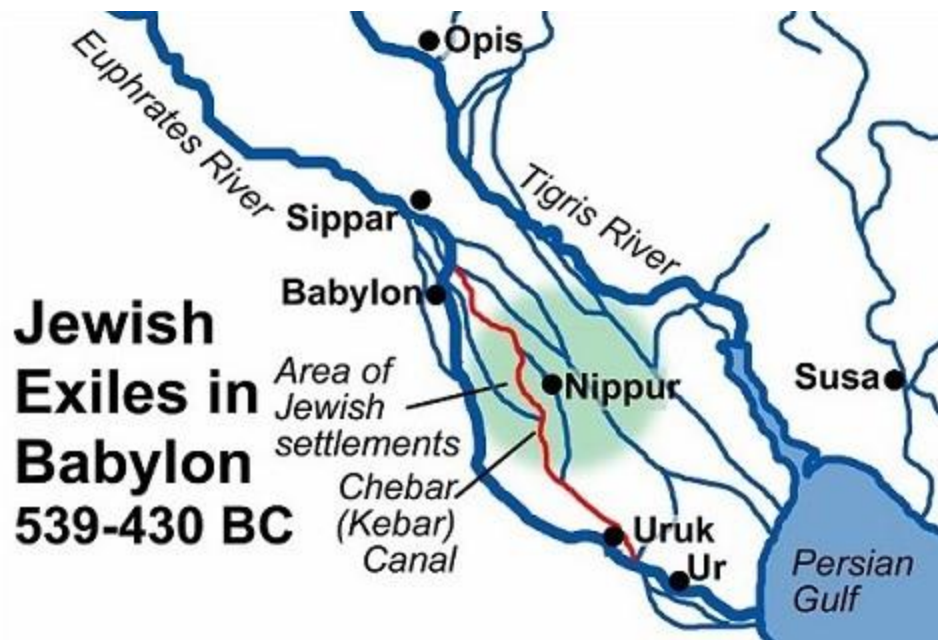


**Nehemiah**



**Rebuilding of the Walls of Jerusalem**

**Main Theme of the Book of Nehemiah:** Nehemiah's primary mission was the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah's secondary mission was social and religious reform.



### Overview of the Events: Ezra Chapters 1-6

**Chapter 1 – King Cyrus of Persia authorizes the return of the first colony of Jews under the leadership of Zerubbabel after the fall of Babylon. (They had been previously taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar II.)**



**Chapter 2 – Chronicle of names and gifts given.**





**Chapter 3 – The altar and the foundation of the temple are built.**

**Chapter 4 – The people offer to help build the temple, but they are not allowed and this causes them to become violent — the work on the temple is put on hold.**

**Chapter 5 – King Darius orders the temple to be completed after a very long delay.**



**Chapter 6 – The temple is finished and dedicated. Old rituals are observed in the temple.**

## **Ezra Chapters 7 – 10**

**Chapter 7 – King Artaxerxes authorizes the return of the second colony of Jews under the leadership of Ezra.**

**Chapter 8 – Chronicle of the names of Ezra's company returning to Jerusalem. Ezra calls upon the LORD to protect them as they carry valuables through dangerous places on the journey.**

**Chapter 9 -10 – Ezra confesses for the people to the LORD. The people begin social reform.**

## **Nehemiah Chapters 1 – 3**

**Chapter 1 – The Walls of Jerusalem are broken down and Nehemiah fasts and prays for the people.**

**Chapter 2 – Nehemiah seeks permission from the King to rebuild the wall. He is laughed at by some whom he thought to be his friends.**

**Chapter 3 – Nehemiah enlists the help of all classes of people to rebuild the wall.**



**Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem**

## **Nehemiah Chapters 4 – 7**

**Chapter 4 – Nehemiah continues the project and overcomes wrath and contempt, conspiracy, and the continued discouragement of friends by placing his trust in God.**

**Chapter 5 – Nehemiah rebukes the people for being selfish and full of greed and shows them his own example of sacrifice that they might follow in his way.**

**Chapter 6 – Even though some conspired against Nehemiah the wall is completed, and the enemies are astounded that it was even possible.**

**Chapter 7 – A recap of the genealogy register of those who came up from Babylonian captivity and the gifts given.**

### **Nehemiah Chapters 8-13**



**Chapter 8 – Ezra reads the Law to the people, and they celebrate the Feast of Booths.**

**Chapter 9 – 10 – The people confess their sins to the LORD and make a covenant to obey God's laws. This marks the beginning of the return of the nation of Israel to the God who delivered them from their enemies.**

**Chapter 11 – Jerusalem is repopulated.**

**Chapter 12 – The Wall is dedicated and there is service at the temple.**

## **Chapter 13 – Nehemiah begins his second mission: social and religious reform.**

### **Final Thoughts**

**Despite much opposition and discouragement Ezra and Nehemiah overcame obstacle after obstacle to finish the missions that God had given them. Because of their strong leadership skills, prayer, hard work, steadfast courage and even self-sacrificing examples, God saved the Jewish people from captivity in Babylon and restored their city in Jerusalem. Ezra and Nehemiah and their history are great examples of how the Lord can use anyone to do anything, even bring a disobedient and ungrateful people back to the One True God.**

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