

EZRA

Book note for Ezra

2 Chronicles ended with the exile, fulfilled a second time in A.D. 70 under Titus (see book note at 2 Chr. 1:1). The return in Ezra matched the Balfour Declaration of 1917. (Note continued with book note of Neh. 1:1.)

Ezra rebuilt the temple, Nehemiah some 15 years later rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. Without the foundation of worship (Ezra's job) there can be no rebuilding of the personality of the believers (Nehemiah's work).

Likewise Jesus did Ezra's work with the first advent (1 Cor. 3:17) and he will do Nehemiah's work with the second advent insofar as the Jews are concerned.

As far as New Testament believers are concerned, belief in Jesus fulfills the first and being predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29) fulfills the second.

In the Vulgate and Arabic this is called the First Book of Ezra, Nehemiah being the second. The Jews accounted both as one book. Ezra was a priest, the son of Seraiah (7:1; 2 Ki. 25:18; 1 Chr. 6:14) the high priest slain by Nebuchadnezzar, and the younger brother of Josedech, who succeeded his father as high priest, and uncle to Joshua that succeeded him. The prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah have their first fulfillment here.

For a chronology of the kings and events see note to 4:6.

Chapter note for Ezra 1

1 The proclamation of Cyrus for the building of the temple. 5 The people provide for the return. 7 Cyrus restoreth the vessels of the temple to Sheshbazzar.

Ezra 1:1

Ezra = helper. Ezra was both priest and scribe -- cf. Neh. 12:26.

Isa. 44:28 -- **Cyrus** = sun, had been king of Persia for some time; this is his first year as king of all four realms, particularly Babylon. Cicero reports that all in all, Cyrus reigned 30 years. According to Herodotus he reigned 29 years. Africanus, using various ancient historians, proved that it was the first year of the 55th Olympiad, about the 20th year of Cyrus's reign as king of Persia. It seems he may have ruled nine years over the total kingdom, from 539-530 B.C.

For a biographical sketch of Cyrus, see note to Isa. 44:28.

The prophecy: Jer. 29:10; 25:12; 2 Chr. 34:21.

A.M. 3464. The book spans 70 years. For chronological information see note to 4:6.

Ezra 1:2

Cyrus gives God the glory. His kingdom included the nations of the Medes and Hyrcanians, Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, Phrygians, Carians, Phoenicians, Babylonians, Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, Scythians, Paphlagonians, Megadinians, Greeks in Asian, Cyprians, and Egyptians (fm. Xenophon).

Ezra 1:3

I.e., the God of Israel is THE God.

Ezra 1:4

The Gentile communities are ordered to contribute to the travel expenses of those Jews who are too poor to pay for the trip. Those Jews who choose to remain, should contribute to the work.

Ezra 1:7

The vessels, taken to Babylon (2 Chr. 36:7; Dan. 1:2) were thus providentially preserved from perishing with the temple.

Ezra 1:8

Sheshbazzar = tribulation linen; worshipper of the king (tsar); his Hebrew name is Zerubbabel.

Ezra 1:11

The aforementioned total 2499. 2 Chr. 36:18 mentions vessels great and small, so Aben Ezra thinks that the 2499 are the greater vessels while the total including the lesser is 5400.

Chapter note for Ezra 2

1 The number that return, of the people, 36 of the priests, 40 of the Levites, 43 of the Nethenims, 55 of Solomon's servants, 62 of the priests which could not show their pedigree. 64 The whole number of them, with their substance. 68 Their oblations.

Ezra 2:1

Compare Neh. 7:5 v.f. Not only is there one additional name, Nahamani, in Nehemiah's list but after each introduction there follows a list of names and the number of people accompanying each name. The two lists are markedly different, especially in the numbers.

Ezra went to rebuild the temple in accordance with the decree issued in the first year of Cyrus of Persia (Ezr. 1:1). The list in Ezra 2 is the list of those who accompanied him then.

Ezra was still at work in Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes (Ezr. 7:7). Nehemiah arrived to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem thirteen years later, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1). During those 13 years two things happened. First, another group arrived from exile with Nahamani. Second, as recorded in Ezra chapter 10, Ezra removed all those who would not put away their strange wives. At that time Ezra evidently amended the list to reflect those changes plus the births and deaths which had taken place in the interim. It is this amended list which Nehemiah found, as recorded in Neh. 7:5. And so the matter is resolved.

Ezra 2:2

Neh. 7:7; Probably not the same person as Est. 2:5 q.v..

-- SERAIAH

Azariah in Neh. 7:7.

-- REELAIAH

Raamiah in Neh. 7.

-- MIZPAR

Mispereth in Neh. 7:7.

-- REHUM

Nehum in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:5

Neh. 11:10. 652 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:6

Num. 11:11. 2818 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:8

845 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:10

648 in Neh. 7.

-- BANI

Binnui in Neh. 7:15.

Ezra 2:11

628 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:12

2,322 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:13

667 in Neh. 7. **Adonikam** = lord of rebellion.

Ezra 2:14

2,067 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:15

655 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:17

324 in Neh. 7.

Ezra 2:18

-- **JORAH**

Hariph in Neh. 7:24.

Ezra 2:20

Neh. 7:25.

-- **GIBBAR**

Gibeon in Neh. 7:25.

Ezra 2:24

-- **AZMAVETH**

Beth-azmaveth in Neh. 7:28.

Ezra 2:40

-- **HODAVIAH**

Hodevah in Neh. 7:43.

Ezra 2:44

-- **SIAHA**

Sia in Neh. 7:47.

Ezra 2:46

-- **SHALMAI**

Shamlai in Neh. 7:41.

Ezra 2:50

-- **NEPHUSIM**

Nephishesim in Neh. 7:52.

Ezra 2:52

-- **BAZLUTH**

BAzlith in Neh. 7:54.

Ezra 2:55

-- **PERUDA**

Perida in Neh. 7:57.

Ezra 2:57

Pochereth = to box in, entrap, restrain.

Zebaim = beautiful; goodly; roebucks. The two names are erroneously taken as one in Strong's and in QuickVerse.

-- **POCHERETH**

H6380

-- **ZEBAIM**

H6643

-- **AMI**

Amon in Neh. 7:59.

Ezra 2:59

-- ADDAN

Addon in Neh. 7:61.

Ezra 2:63

Tirshatha = special emmissary, in one case, Nehemiah (Neh. 8:9).

Ezra 2:64

Neh. 7:66.

Chapter note for Ezra 3

1 The altar is set up. 4 Offerings frequented. 7 Workmen prepared. 8 The foundations of the temple are laid in great joy and mourning.

Ezra 3:1

Tishri, Sept-Oct. They gathered for the feast of tabernacles (v. 4).

Ezra 3:2

Jeshua the high priest, Zerubbabel the governor. They build the altar without a temple. They probably placed it on the base of the original temple altar on the temple site (v.3).

Ezra 3:3

As directed in Ex. 29:38-39.

Ezra 3:4

Lev. 23:34-42; Num. 29:12-38. 15th day.

Ezra 3:6

The first day was the feast of trumpets (Lev. 23:24-25).

The tenth day was the day of atonement (Lev. 23:27-32).

Ezra 3:8

A.M. 3464-5.

“From twenty years old and upward” is by David’s modification (1 Chr. 23:24).

Ezra 3:12

Hag. 2:3.

Chapter note for Ezra 4

1 The adversaries, being not accepted in the building of the temple with the Jews, endeavour to hinder it. 7 Their letter to Artaxerxes. 17 The decree of Artaxerxes. 23 The building is hindered.

The Samaritans were the descendents of the idolaters of Israel after the division of the kingdom. These introduced many of the trappings of Roman Catholicism via the Levite and Ephraimites as related in Judg. 17-18. With the end times in view, we can identify the “Samaritans” as the synagogue of Satan (Rev. 2:9; 3:9, q.v.); “Jews” (Catholics, Illuminati) who have worked hand-in-hand with the popes to destroy not only gentile nations but even the real Jews.

When the time to rebuild the temple comes, these will repeat the pattern traced here by the Samaritans and Arabians (Neh.)

Ezra 4:2

Pr. 21:4. Modern ecumenical movement.

Not only did they sacrifice with idols, but God commanded that sacrifices be done only in Jerusalem.

Esar-haddon = gift of fire. Note the connection of his name with sacrificial altars. 2 Ki. 17:24. Evidently their worship system was derived at a later date than their introduction into the land which happened under Asnapper (v. 10).

Ezra 4:5

Lobbyists.

Ezra 4:6

According to Jarchi, this was Ahasuerus the husband of Esther (Esth. 1:1; 3:1; 8:1); but most, including Josephus, think it was Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus. Yet that succession is based on only one ancient authority; there could have been another ruler between Cyrus and Cambyses which ruler could be the Ahasuerus of this verse, but this seems unlikely. Cambyses, son of Cyrus, would then be the Artaxerxes of v. 7, which is commonly assumed anyhow.

Cambyses (Artaxerxes) was an enemy of the Egyptians and feared the Jews might take part with them and so was no friend of the Jews. I might speculate that perhaps Ahasuerus of v. 6 came to power with Egyptian help and Cambyses may have removed all references to him when the latter came to power. Nevertheless, Cambyses is the name by which the heathen writers denote this man. Between Cambyses and Darius there was Smerdis the magician and impostor. He reigned but seven months and is usually dismissed as this Artaxerxes because he declared a three-year moratorium on tribute and military conscription, there being no reason at the time to threaten loss of revenue (v. 20). Besides, this would allow the work on the temple to stop for only a year or two.

The secular chronologists, which is all we have at this point, give the following dates and biblical correlations:

Cyrus	558-528 B.C.	Conquered Medes 550, Babylon in 538 Return of Zerubbabel and Jeshua (538)
Ahasuerus?	A year or so	See note above
Artaxerxes = Cambyses	528 - 521	Rebuilding of temple stopped
Smerdis	521 - 521	The pretender
Darius I = Artaxerxes = Hystaspis	521 - 485	Haggai and Zechariah prophecy 520 Ezra returns. Temple completed 515
Ahasuerus = Xerxes I	485 - 465	Husband of Esther
Artaxerxes I = Longimanus	465 - 425	Return of Nehemiah (446) Prophecy of Malachi (434)
Xerxes II	425-424	with Secydianus or Sogdianus
Darius II	424 - 404	Nothus
Artaxerxes II	404 - 359	
Artaxerxes III	359 - 338	Ochus
Arses	338 - 336	
Darius III	336 - 330	

Ezra 4:7

Neh. 2:1 for date.

Artaxerxes = silent light; hasty joy.

Bishlam = in peace.

Mithredath = given to the sun or fire god, Mithras, who was worshipped in caves.

Tabeel = goodness of God.

Persia = horseman (fm. it founder, **Persis** = one who takes by storm).

Ezra 4:8

Rehum = compassionate (in a liberal sense, see Isa. 32:5).

Shimshai = sun of the lord.

Ezra 4:9

Dinaite = judge, (a follower of Diana?).

Apharsathchites = dividers by deception.

Tarpelites = from the fallen or wondrous (mysterious?) mountain.

Apharsites = causers of deception.

Archevite = length, that which lengthens; health; "burg;" (Enoch) -- a native of Erech (Gen. 10:10).

Susanchites = lilly; trumpet (herald). (The palace was called Shushan -- Est. 1:2).

Dehavites = golden ones; sick ones.

Elamites = virgin; hidden ones; occult ones.

Ezra 4:10

Asnapper = calf; bull. Note that the proximity of gold (Dehavites, v. 9). This was the king who repopulated Samaria; the king who exiled them was Tilgath-pileser whose name means mother of god and is typed by a "female" devil called Mary. Ex. 32:4; 1 Kings 12:28. See note to v. 2.

According to many Asnapper is the same as Sennacherib (2 Ki. 18:13), but one (Grotius) says Salmaneser. Christian commentators say he is the same as Esar-haddon on the basis of v. 2 and 2 Ki. 17:24-29 in context. Esar-haddon was son of Sennacherib and grandson of Salmaneser.

Samaria = watchstation; guardianship.

Ezra 4:13

Custom is a toll on transported goods or travel.

Ezra 4:14

Re. maintenance: Heb. *salem*, salt, as some places of honor and trust were paid in salt in those days. Pliny observed that such rewards were called *salaries*.

Ezra 4:15

As the city was destroyed under Nebuchadnezzar, cf. 2 Ki. 24:1, 20; and 2 Ki. 25:1, 9.

Ezra 4:17

"At such time," i.e., prosperity, timely successes, health, etc.

Ezra 4:20

1 Ki. 4:21, 24; 2 Sam. 8.

Ezra 4:24

Zech. 1:1.

Prob. Darius Hystaspis who succeeded Cambyses, son of Cyrus. Some say Darius Nothus, but that leaves a period of 100 or 140 years of waiting which, in turn, would stretch the age of Zerubbabel who both laid the foundation of the temple and finished it.

Chapter note for Ezra 5

1 Zerubbabel and Jeshua, incited by Haggai and Zechariah, set forward the building of the temple. 3 Tatnai and Shethar-boznai could not hinder the Jews. 6 Their letter to Darius against the Jews.

This chapter relates how that the the people of the Jews were stirred up by the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah to resume building the temple, notwithstanding the orders to the contrary from the deputy-governors of the king of Persia; nor could the present ones cause them to cease from it; though it must be owned they behaved towards them in a better manner than the former ones did (vv. 1-5). These, upon answers from the Jews wrote a letter to Darius, to know the truth of things, in which they fairly state the case of the Jews, as they had it from them, so far as they understood it (vv. 6-17).

Ezra 5:1

Haggai = sacrifice, solemn -- the lamb of the feast.

Zechariah = remembrance of JAH. He was the grandson of Iddo as Barachiah was his father, see Zec. 1:1.

Iddo = timely; great calamity.

These two prophets reproved them for building their own houses while leaving the Lord's house unfinished.

Recall, too, that the prohibition was against the rebuilding of the city, not the temple.

Their opponents encouraged and were happy to let them think the prohibition extended to the building of the temple, too.

We tend to do the same in our spiritual lives, placing our "needs" and the commands of our civil governments over and above the Lord's commands (e.g. the free exercise of the Christian religion is guaranteed by the constitution but since 1963 all levels of U.S. government have worked to negate the constitution).

Ezra 5:2

Zerubbabel = flown from Babylon

Shealtiel = Asked of God

Jozadak = cleansed by JAH.

Ezra 5:3

That is, the west side of the Euphrates.

Tatnai = gift.

Shethar-boznai = star of splendor; who searched my despisers.

Ezra 5:6

Tatnai = gift.

Shetharboznai = star of splendor; who searched my despisers.

Apharsachites = dividers by deception.

Ezra 5:13

1:1-4.

Ezra 5:14

Sheshbazzar is Zerubbabel (v. 16). Zec. 4:9.

Ezra 5:16

Sheshbazzar is Zerubbabel (Zec. 4:9). The first of Cyrus to the second of Darius is about 18 years. The work had stopped for about 10 years (4:6).

Chapter note for Ezra 6

1 Darius, finding the decree of Cyrus, maketh a new decree for the advancement of the buildings. 13 By the help of the enemies, and the directions of the prophets, the temple is finished. 16 The feast of the dedication is kept, 19 and the passover.

Darius the first, searched for the decree by Cyrus, found it, and confirmed it (vv. 1-7). He made a fresh decree, and ordered expenses for the building of the temple and for its dedication sacrifices to be paid out of his tribute. He commanded that anyone hindering the work should be hanged on a timber of his own house, and imprecated a curse on anyone who would destroy the temple (vv. 8-12).

The temple was finished (vv. 13-15), dedicated (vv. 16-18), and the passover was kept by all the people (vv. 19-22).

Ezra 6:3

This height is twice the height of Solomon's temple (1 Ki. 6:2) though 60 cubits less than the height of the porch which was 120 (2 Chr. 3:4). The breadth of Solomon's temple was 20 cubits (1 Ki. 6:2).

Cyrus is the one who specifies the dimensions of the second temple.

Ezra 6:4

1 Ki. 6:36.

Ezra 6:8

According to Herodotus, this Darius (the first), was the first to exact a tribute and so was nicknamed the "huckster." The tribute totaled 14,560 Euboic talents of gold.

According to Josephus, before becoming king, Darius vowed to God that if he should become king, he would send all the sacred vessels that were in Babylon to the temple at Jerusalem.

Ezra 6:14

5:1. Hag. 1:1; Zec. 1:1.

Ezra 6:16

Four years after Darius renewed the decree with a hiatus of about 10 years during which the building ceased (5:16).

Chapter note for Ezra 7

1 Ezra goeth up to Jerusalem. 11 The gracious commission of Artaxerxes to Ezra. 27 Ezra blesseth God for his favour.

Ezra 7:1

If this were Artaxerxes I (see note to 4:6), then this second trip of Ezra starts 81 years after the first, in 458 B.C..

Most think that this king is the same as Darius of the previous chapter, which would make the interval 23 years, at the completion of the temple in 515 B.C. One possibility that seems to be overlooked is that this may be Xerxes under the Persian title, that is, Ahasuerus the husband of Esther. If so, then this would be in 480 B.C. which gives an interval of 59 years. This appears strained.

Ezra 7:3

Six generations are missing between Azariah and Meraioth. See 1 Chr. 6:7-10.

Ezra 7:7

See note to v. 1.

Ezra 7:9

I.e., the trip took four months, from the first of Nissan to the first of Abib. The latter is July-August.

Ezra 7:14

Such a number the kings of Persia used to have from the times of Darius Hystaspis, who was chosen out of seven nobles to be king, and ever after the Persian kings had seven counsellors privileged, as those nobles were (Est. 1:14). Darius Hystaspis is the Darius mentioned in the previous two chapters and the one many believe is here referred to as Artaxerxes.

Ezra 7:19

Not the vessels previously sent which used to be in the original temple.

Ezra 7:24

The basis for tax-exempt churches since taxation makes churches and their leadership subject to governmental influence. It was usual with the heathens to except ecclesiastics from taxes, tributes, and imposts; so the priests of Egypt, and the Druids of Britain.

Ezra 7:25

Ezra is to appoint a civil government as per Deu. 4:6; 16:18; 17:9.

Ezra 7:26

“The law of the king...” probably refers to the law herein written which empowered the Jews to execute their own laws.

Ezra 7:28

Therefore Ezra wrote this book.

Chapter note for Ezra 8

1 The companions of Ezra, who returned from Babylon. 15 He sendeth to Iddo for ministers for the temple. 21 He keepeth a fast. 24 He committeth the treasures to the custody of the priests. 31 From Ahava they come to Jerusalem. 33 The treasure is weighed in the temple. 36 The commission is delivered.

In this chapter we are told who and how many went up with Ezra to Jerusalem (vv. 1-14), the gathering of them together at the river, from whence he sent to Babylon for Levites to come to him, who did (vv. 15-20), the proclaiming a fast for the safe and prosperous journey (vv. 21-23), the delivery of the vessels and money given him into the hands of the priests, to take care and charge thereof (vv. 24-30), their safe arrival at Jerusalem, where they deposited the gifts in the temple, offered sacrifices to God, and delivered the king's commission to his lieutenants and governors (vv. 31-36).

Ezra 8:27

This copper, (possibly alloyed with gold and silver which was known as Corinthian brass as it was found when Corinth was burnt) was so bright and pure and free from corrosion that it could not be distinguished from gold by its color but was usually distinguished by smell.

Chapter note for Ezra 9

1 Ezra mourneth for the affinity of the people with strangers. 5 He prayeth unto God with confession of sins.

Ezra 9:4

I.e., those who feared the word of the Lord.

Ezra 9:5

The evening sacrifice was offered at the ninth hour, 3:00 P.M.

Ezra 9:6

A true sight and sense of shame causes shame and blushing.

Ezra 9:9

Bondmen to the Babylonians, which was more than the Jews of Jesus' time would own (Jn. 8:33).

Ezra 9:11

Deu. 8:3; Josh. 23:12; Judg. 2:2. Also see Lev. 18.

Ezra 9:12

I.e., in marriage, Deu. 7:3.

Chapter note for Ezra 10

1 Shechaniah encourageth Ezra to reform the strange marriages. 6 Ezra mourning assembleth the people. 9 The people, at the exhortation of Ezra, repent, and promise ammendment. 15 The care to perform it. 18 The names of them which had married strange wives.

Upon Ezra's prayer and confession, Shechaniah proposed that those who had married strange wives should put them away with their children, which they swore to do (vv. 1-5), and proclamation was made throughout the land for all to meet at Jerusalem in three day's time, and accordingly they did (vv. 6-9), when, at the exhortation of Ezra, all agreed to it, and persons were appointed to see it done, and the work was finished in the space of three months (vv. 10-17), and a list of the names of those is given who had married such wives, and now put them away; of the priests, vv. 18-22, of the Levites, vv. 23-24, of the other Israelites, vv. 24-44.

Ezra 10:2

Hope of a reformation of this evil, and a pardon for it.

Ezra 10:3

Just as Ishmael and his mother were removed from Abraham and Isaac.

Ezra 10:4

Ezra lay prostrate on the ground for this matter (v. 5).

Ezra 10:9

The month Cisleu, Nov. - Dec. This is about the same time as Hanukkah, the feast of the dedication mentioned in Jn. 10:22 which see for the connection with this event.

The street: led to the temple, the east street, 2 Chr. 29:4.

Ezra 10:13

That is, the time it would take to appear before the rulers of all the congregation (v. 14).

Ezra 10:14

Nationwide.

Ezra 10:15

I.e., these men saw to it that the affair was conducted in the manner proposed; that the magistrates of every city brought the persons that had been delinquents and gave them notice, and took account of them as they came.

Ezra 10:16

The tenth month is Tebeth (Dec. - Jan.) This was ten days since v. 9.

Ezra 10:17

First of Nissan (Mar. - Apr.) It took three months as per v. 13.

Ezra 10:44

In all, about 113. No mention is made of the children being put away as Shechaniah proposed, (v. 3), it may be concluded that they were not, but were taken care of, to be educated in the true religion, and entered proselytes at a proper time. In v. 11, Ezra makes no mention of putting them away.