

Ezra & Nehemiah – 10 & 13 Chapters

Titles:

Ezra and Nehemiah- (one book in the Hebrew OT) named after their main characters

Author:

Anonymous, tradition suggests possibly Ezra- (many sources)
Much of Nehemiah is a first person account from Nehemiah

Occasion and Purpose:

Probably written as the Hebrews were recently returned from the Babylonian exile. Times were difficult and it was not easily apparent that they were living in God's blessing and promises. Probably written to encourage the returned exiles that God had not forgotten them, to remind them that God's promises were still in effect, and to challenge them to live faithfully- not the idolatry and compromise of their forefathers.

Themes:

1. Rebuilding Temple
2. Rebuilding Wall
3. Rebuilding obedience to the Law
4. Rebuilding faithfulness
5. Purified, but not perfect

Summary:

Ezra- Tells the story of the return from Babylon of the Jewish people who had been captive there as the result of punishment from God. Story of restoration and hope. The People return and the temple is rebuilt in the midst of great opposition. The people take measures to insure they don't fall under God's judgment again.

Nehemiah- Similar to Ezra. Years after Ezra, Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem and undertook to rebuild the walls of the city against great obstacles and oppositions. Under the vision and leadership of one man, the great work of rebuilding the city was completed. God provided a great revival among the people as a result.

Organization:

1 st Return	Decree of Cyrus – 1:1-4	1:1-2:70
	Exiles return – 1:5-11	
	List of the returned exiles – 2:1-67	
	Arrival at Jerusalem -2:68-70	
Rebuild Temple	Beginning of the Temple – 3:1-13	3:1-6:22
	Temple work stops because of opposition – 4:1-24	
	Temple work renewed – 5:1-6:12	
	Temple completed and dedicated – 6:13-22	
2 nd Return	Ezra returns to Jerusalem – 7:1-10	7:1-8:36
	Letter of Artaxerxes – 7:11-28	
	List of the returning exiles – 8:1-14	
	The trip to Jerusalem – 8:15-36	
Separation Rebuild	The problem of foreign marriage – 9:1-4	9:1-10:44
	Ezra's Prayer – 9:5-15	
	Confession of Sin – 10:1-17	
	List of the guilty parties – 10:18-44	
3 rd Return	Nehemiah's prayer – 1:1-11	1:1-2:10
	Nehemiah's return – 2:1-10	
Rebuild Walls	Inspection of the walls – 2:11-20	2:11-7:73
	Building of the walls – 3:1-32	
	Opposition to building – 4:1-6:14	
	Completion of the walls – 6:15-7:3	
	List of the returned exiles – 7:4-73	
Rebuild Religion	Ezra reads the Law – 8:1-18	8:1-13:31
	Confession of sins – 9:1-37	
	Covenant of obedience – 9:38-39	
	List of the returned exiles – 11:1-12:26	
	Dedication of the wall – 12:27-47	
	Nehemiah's reforms – 13:1-31	

Key Verses:

Ezra 3:2-3; 3:10-13; 6:14-15; 7:6,9-10; 9:7-9; Neh 2:4-5; 2:17-18; 9:2-3