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Introduction to Ezra

The Old Testament is comprised of 39 books, the revelation of the words of God spoken and recorded for every person to read for themselves.

1. The first five are called the Pentateuch, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.
2. The books of history follow, which are twelve, nine pre-captivity, Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings and 1-2Chronicles and three post-captivity, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.
- * The prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi should be read, as well as the book of Daniel.
3. The next five are the poetical books, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon.
4. Then comes six of the Mayor Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.
5. Last are the twelve Minor Prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

- a. There are six Minor Prophets pre-captivity of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria in 722 B.C.
 - 1) Obadiah 845 B.C.
 - 2) Joel 835 B.C.
 - 3) Jonah 765 B.C.
 - 4) Amos 760 B.C.
 - 5) Hosea 740 B.C. he is the sixth in chronological order.
 - 6) Micah 735 B.C.

- b. There are three Minor Prophets pre-captivity of the Southern Kingdom by Babylon from 606-586 B.C.
 - 1) Nahum 710 B.C.
 - 2) Zephaniah 625 B.C.
 - 3) Habakkuk 608 B.C.
- c. There are three Minor Prophets post-captivity from Babylon from 536-425 B.C.
 - a. Haggai 520 B.C.
 - b. Zechariah 520 B.C.
 - c. Malachi 430 B.C.
- d. The twelve Minor Prophets were gathered and grouped by Ezra Ei “The Great Synagogue” in 475 B.C. called “The book of the twelve.”
 - 1) Our Bible distinguishes the Minor Prophets from the Major Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.
 - 2) We are told that the title “Minor Prophets” was given due to their shorter prophetic content to the larger content of the “Major Prophets”, but it is not true to form, Daniel has less chapter than Hosea and Zechariah.
 - 3) The “Minor Prophets” are in no way less importance or inferior to the Major Prophets, both spoke and wrote under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit. 2Tim. 3:16-17; 2Pet. 1:19-21

We want to begin our study of the book of Ezra as all others with a complete introduction to the book.

I. The particulars of the book of Ezra.

A. The place of Ezra in the English Bible falls under the second of five categories, the historical books.

1. First and Second Samuel.
2. First and Second Kings.
3. First and Second Chronicles.
4. Ezra.
5. Nehemiah.
6. Esther.

B. The authorship of Ezra and the Hebrew Canon.

1. The book of Ezra is excepted to be written by Ezra, like 1-2 Chronicles, 430-425 B.C.
2. In the Hebrew Bible the Masoretic text, and Greek LXX, Ezra and Nehemiah are combined into one book called "The book of Ezra", but they not one work, but two.
3. Ezra was first separated in the Latin Vulgate A.D. 400 by Jerome.
4. The book of Ezra is considered by liberal modern commentators as a fragment of a larger work including the book of Nehemiah and Chronicles, compiled and edited by an unknown author 200 years after Ezra.
 - a. There was an apographal book of Ezra composed of passages from the second book of Chronicles, the book of Ezra and Nehemiah and certain popular legends that had long been current among the

Hellenistic Jews together with the cononical book of Ezra.

- b. These modern critics separated as i Ezra from the book of Nehemiah that they call ii Ezra, while the Greek book of Ezra is called iii Ezra, to which was subsequently added the falsely so-called book of Ezra as iv Ezra.
- c. They also label a section of the memores of Ezra and Nehemiah, also section going from the first person to the third person.
 - * The evidence is subjective and weak!
5. There are various sections written in Aramaic. Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:2-26
 - a. Liberal commentators attempt to used this fact for their hypothesis of a framgnmented composition.
 - b. Also that Ezra 2 is repeated in Nehemiah. Neh. 7:6-71
 - c. Archeological finds have vindicated the The authenticity of Ezra by the contents of Cyrus Cylinder and Nabonidus Chronicales which verify Cyrus practice of securing the repatriation of the enslaved people.
 - d. Elephantine papyri 1903 confirm Persian interest in the religious and social well being of their subjects
5. The book of Ezra is the first of three post-captive historical books, the other two are

Nehemiah and Esther, covering about 100 years.

6. Ezra and Nehemiah deal with the returning remnant to repatriate the nation, Ezra to rebuild the city and Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of the city.
7. Esther deals with the events of those who stayed in the land of captivity after Persia reigned having become comfortable and even wealthy.

C. The spiritual state of the nation was not very hopeful as our study in First and Second Chronicles revealed.

1. The mindset of God's people at the writing of Chronicles was discouraged and disillusioned about the Davidic covenant.
2. They even came to the point of thinking that it was not a literal covenant and that it wasn't going to take place.
3. They had lost hope in the covenant God had made with David.
4. So Chronicles served as an exhortation to encourage the people by way of reminder about God's faithfulness to keep His word regarding the blessing and cursings.
5. They had gone into captivity for their disobedience of the covenant of God, now God had brought them back to restore them.

6. The book of Ezra is the fulfillment of prophecy, 70 years 606-536 B.C. Jer. 25:12; 29:10; Is. 44:28-45:1
 - * The prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi fit in this period of history and provide great insight to the people and times.
7. The phrase "the God of heaven" appears 20 times in the Old Testament.
 - a. Nine in Ezra. Ezra 1:2; 5:11, 12; 6:9, 10; 7:12, 21, 23
 - b. Four in Nehemiah. Neh. 1:4, 5; 2:4, 20
 - c. Five in Daniel. Dan. 2:18, 19, 28, 37, 44
 - d. The reason is no Temple exists any more.
 - e. Of the 18 in the post-exilic books, 12 are in Aramaic and used in a document produced by a foreign king,
 - f. The phrase is translated from an Aramaic for the decree of Cyrus for the reader and exiles. Ezra 1:2
 - g. The four occurrences in Nehemiah in Hebrew are in a Persian context or in a conversation with a foreigner or enemy of Israel, in the land of Israel. Neh. 1:4; 2:4, 20
8. The Urim and Thummim is mentioned.
 - a. "And the governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim." Ezra 2:63
 - 1) The terms mean lights and perfections.

- 2) Their function was to seek and know the mind of God.
- b. The terms will appear one more time in Nehemiah. Neh. 7:65
* These are the only two references post-captivity.
- c. Pre-captivity there are five references.
* Ex. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8; 1Sam. 28:6

D. The key people in the book of Ezra.

- 1. Zerubbabel is the political leader that spearheaded the first return to repatriate the nation and rebuild the temple in 537-6 B.C. under Cyrus. Ezra 1-6
 - a. This was according to the prophecies of Jeremiah. Jer. 25:12; 29:10; Ezra 1:1-4
 - 1) According to the word of God they had gone into captivity.
 - 2) According to the word of God they had come back from captivity.
 - b. Zerubbabel returns with (42,360) 49,897 Jews, a very small remnant of those that went into captivity. Ezra 2:64-65
 - c. The name “Shealtiel”, is in the direct line of David, a descendant of King Jehoiachin (Jeconiah), through his grandson and is present in the geneology of Jesus. 1Chron. 3:17-19; 2Kings, 24:8-16; Matt. 1:11-13; Lk. 3:27
 - d. Zerubbabel is called by two other names.

- 1) His Babylonian name “Shashbazzar” that means worshipper of fire.
* Some say Shashbazzar was an uncle to Zerubbabel. 1Chron. 3:18
- 2) His Persian title, “Tieshatha” means governor. Ezra 1:8, 11; 2:63; 5:14
- e. Zerubbabel means “sown in Babylon or descended of Babylon”.
 - 1) Indicating he was born in captivity and had never been the land of his fathers.
 - 2) His name appears twenty times in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah, six of those in the book of Ezra. Ezra 2:2; 3:2, 8; 4:2, 3; 5:2
 - 3) Three in the New Testament. Matt. 1:12, 13; Lk. 3:27
- 2. Ezra was the Levitical priest that led the second return to instruct the word of God to the people, which occurs 80 years after Zerubbabel, about 458-7 B.C. Ezra 7-10
 - a. Ezra returns with some of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinims to Jerusalem in the 7th year of king Artaxerxes. Ezra 7:1-7
 - 1) The lineage of Ezra was from the first High Priest of Israel, Aaron. Ezra 7:5
 - 2) The name Jeshua in Ezra is said to be the son of Jozadak, believed to be the same as Joshua in Nehemiah priest, but he Joshua the High Priest at the time of Nehemiah is said to be the son

- of Jehozadak. Ezra 2:2; 10:18; Hag. 1:1, 2,14; 2:2, 4
- 3) Joshua's father Jehozadak was grandson of the last High Priest Hilkiah before exile; son of the high priest Seraiah; and father of the high priest Joshua; but Joshua never officiated the office of high priest being carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, like Ezekiel. 2Kings 25:18; 1Chron. 6:15
 - 4) The journey took four month, from the first day of the first month to the first day of the fifth month. Ezra 7:8-9
 - 5) The total of people were only 1754 people. Ezra 8
- b. Ezra was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the LORD God had given", "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel." Ezra 7:6, 10
- 1) A ready Scribe, an expert to instruct in the Scriptures.
 - 2) Ezra is credited with the organization of the Great Synagogue, Smith's Bible Dictionary in his summary.
 - 3) It consisted of 120 members and these were known as the men of the Great Synagogue, the successors of the prophets, themselves, in their turn,

- succeeded by scribes prominent, individually , as teachers.
- 4) Ezra was recognized as president and their aim was to restore again the crown, or glory of Israel.
 - 5) Collecting all the sacred writings of former ages and their own, and so completed the canon of the Old Testament, under three categories, the Law, the Prophets and the Writings.
 - 6) They organized the ritual of the synagogue, and gave their sanction to the Shemoneh Esreh: the 18 solemn benedictions in it.
- c. The departure of Ezra. Ezra 7-8
- 1) Ezra's office, provisions and decree of Artaxerxes to continue construction. Ezra 7:1-28
 - 2) The heads and people who returned, spiritual repentance, servants for the temple and prayer and fasting for protection. Ezra 8:1-23
 - 3) The dividing of the provisions. Ezra 8:24-30
 - 4) The return and arrival at Jerusalem. Ezra 8:31-36
- d. The disobedience of God's People. Ezra 9
- 1) Ezra is informed of unequally yoked and the call of confession. Ezra 9:1-15

- 2) The people repent, the matter was resolved putting them away with their children, along with the priest who had taken pagan wives. Ezra 10: 1-44
- e. The Jewish months in Ezra.
 - 1) Thirteen times the term month “chodesh” appears in the Ezra.
 - 2) Jews have a civil and religious calendar, most of the references to Jewish months in Scripture is to the religious months.
 - 3) Originally the new year began in autumn, October, but from the Exodus the 7th month “Nisan” April became the first month. Ex. 12:2; 23:16
 - 4) The months are lunar months, therefore every three years or so a thirteenth, intercalary month was added to readjust the year with the sun.

These are the particulars of the book of Ezra!

II. The historical background to the book of Ezra.

- A. The political setting.
 - 1. Two empires were used by God to chasten and lead His people into captivity.

- a. The Assyrian empire was used by God to take captive the Northern Kingdom, 722 B.C.
 - 1) The Assyrian kingdom began from 1430-1000 B.C.
 - 2) The second period of Assyria was from about 880 to 745 B.C.
 - * Both Assyria and Babylon had a period of rise to power followed by a long decline.
 - 3) The third period began in 745-727 B.C. under a cruel general Pul, who reigned under the name of Tiglath-Pileser III until Nineveh was destroyed, 612-608 B.C.
 - 4) Shalmaneser V, 727-22 B.C.
 - 5) Sargon II, 722-705 B.C.
 - 6) Sennacherib 705-681 B.C.
 - 7) Esarhaddon 681-669 B.C.
 - 8) Ashurbanipal 669-626 B.C.
- b. The Babylonian empire was used by God to take captive the Southern Kingdom, 606, 596 B.C.
 - 1) In 626 B.C. Babylon gained their independence under Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar’s father, who reigned at Babylon till 606 B.C.
 - 2) Nebuchadnezzar began his reign in 606-562 B.C.
 - 3) Evil-Merodach, or Amil-Marduk 562-560/59 B.C.

- 4) Nergal-sherezar 550/59-556/55 B.C.
 - 5) Labahsi-Marduk, or Laborisoarchod 556/555, 9 months.
 - 6) Nabonidus, or Nabunahid 555-39 B.C. whose viceroy was the “Belshazzar” of Daniel 553-536 B.C.
 - 7) The kingdom of the Medes regained their independence from Babylon and allied with them to overthrow Nineveh, putting an end to the Assyrian empire.
2. The Medo-Persian Empire succeeded Babylon.
- a. Two three year after the Medes and Persians became one empire, under Cyrus the Persian.
 - c. An insurrection dethroned the last Median king in 559 B.C. and the throne being taken by Cyrus who transferred the supremacy to the Persians.
 - d. Cyrus made Gobryas viceroy, who is Darius of the book of Daniel.
 - e. Cyrus reversed the policy of transporting and cross-populating people as the Assyrians and Babylonians, permitting the people to return to their own countries and restore their own religious institutions.
 - f. The Persian empire lasted from 536-330 B.C.
 - 1) Cyrus the Great 536-29 B.C. Ezra 1:1

- * He began to reign in 557 B.C. over the Medo-Persian empire.
- 2) Darius (Gobryas) who was co-regent with Cyrus. Dan. 6:2, 28
 - 2) Cambyses 530/29-522/21 B.C. Ezra 4:6, 21
 - 3) Guamata (pseudo-Smerdis) Artaxerxes 422 B.C. Ezra 4:7
 - 4) Darius I (Hystaspis) 521-486 B.C. reallowed the temple. Ezra 5:6, 6:1, 3
 - 5) Xerxes I 486-65 B.C. is Ahasuerus of Esther. Esther 1:1
 - 6) Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) 465-424 B.C. Ezra 7:1; Neh. 2:1; 5:14
 - 7) Darius II (Nothus) 424-404 B.C. Neh. 12:22
 - 9) Artaxerxes II (Mnemon) 404-359 B.C.
 - 10) Artaxerxes III (Ochus) 359-338 B.C.
 - 11) Darius III (Codomanus) 336-330 B.C.
3. The Chronicles remember were written when Judah was no longer a monarch.
- a. Judah had no king.
 - b. Judah was a small group of exiles returning from Babylon after 70 years.
 - c. Judah returned as a vassal to the Persian empire.
 - d. This was right on schedule with “The Times of the Gentiles” revealed to Nebuchadnezzar through the image comprising the empires to rule the world

till the setting up of the Kingdom of God on the earth. Dan. 2

* The metals decline in purity and worth being inferior to the previous one.

- 1) Babylon was the head of gold.
- 2) Medo-Persia was the shoulders and arms of silver.
- 3) Greece was the belly of brass.
- 4) The legs of iron was Rome.
- 5) The last empire was the ten toes of iron and clay, the Anti-Christ and the ten-nation confederacy.
- 6) The rock that struck the image at the feet, indicating the Second Coming of Jesus to set up the Kingdom Age. Dan. 2:31-45

2. The Jews had been placed by God in positions of influence.
 - a. Daniel had served as prime minister in Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar and Persia under Cyrus. Dan. 2, 6
 - b. Esther was Queen and Mordecai was prime minister of Persia in the time of Ahasuerus, the father of Artaxerxes I. Longimanus would give the decree to Nehemiah to restore and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in troublous time. Esther 2,6; Neh. 1-2

B. The religious setting.

1. The Temple of Solomon was gone, it had been completely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. 2Kings 24-25
2. The traditional pantheon of gods existed and the recently developed religious and philosophical thinking.
 - a. Before Cyrus conquered Babylon, there were over 50 temples to the gods, 55 shrines for astronomical divinities, 180 altars to the female goddess Ishtar and to the key Babylonian gods Nergal and Addad and 12 additional altars to various other deities.
 - b. Socrates in 469 B.C, Plato in 427 B.C. and Aristotle in 384 B.C. that developed much of the Grecian or Hellenistic thought that later affected the world.
 - c. Zoroaster in 629-551 B.C. developed Zoroastrianism with its two hierarchies of good and evil that spread all over the Persian world.
 - d. Buddha in 563-486 B.C. developed his “four noble truths” of Buddhism rejecting ancient Hinduism with its “casts”, spreading all over India.
 - e. Confucius in 551-479 B.C. taught in China during the time of great internal strife and rejection of religious traditions.
3. The time period was crucial and of greatest importance to preserve the covenant of God.

- a. As stated Zerubbabel was the political leader that led the first return to repatriate the nation and rebuild the temple to worship Yahweh in 536-7 B.C. under Cyrus. Ezra 1-6
 - a. The people were back in the land, but not back with their God, but a small remnant.
 - b. The tendency as we already stated was to dismiss the covenant and promise of the Messianic Davidic Kingdom.
 - c. This spiritual stagnation is revealed through the six post-exilic books, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.
4. The second was led by Ezra that occurs 80 years after Zerubbabel, about 457 B. C. Ezra 7-10
- a. The temple of Zerubbabel was completed in 516 B.C.
 - b. The Chronicles were written to remind and encourage the people about God's faithfulness focusing on the line of David and Judah, the tribe Messiah would come from.
- C. The opposition since they returned.
- 1. The Samaritans wanted to participate in the building, but they were not allowed because of their impure genealogy, so became adversaries to the building and made false accusations to the king in Persia. Ezra 4

- a. They attempted to discourage God's people.
 - b. They attempted to frustrate their purposes.
 - c. They falsely accused them of planning to rebel against Artaxerxes, escape taxes and dishonor the king.
2. The work had ceased for sixteen years from 536-520 B.C. and the people became indifferent, complacent and materialistic, so God called Haggai and Zechariah to stir up the rest by rebuke, exhortation and promise. Ezra 5:1; Hag 1:1; 2:18; Zech. 4:9; 8:9
- a. The prophesy was directed to two individuals.
 - 1) To Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah. Hag. 1:1d-e; 2:2a-b
 - 2) To Joshua the high priest. Hag. 1:1f-g; 2:2c-d
 - b. The prophesy of Haggai contains four messages delivered within four months, Sept.-Dec. 520 B. C. Hag. 1:1; 2:1, 10, 20
 - 1) The first on September the first. Hag. 1
 - 2) The second on the twenty-first day of October. Hag. 2:1-9
 - 3) The third on the twenty-fourth day of December. Hag. 2:10-19

- 4) The fourth on the twenty-fourth day of the same month, December. Hag. 2:20-23
- c. The prophecy of Zechariah, who was also a priest are of two categories, before the building of the Temple and after.
- 1) The prophecies before the building of the temple, all dated. Zech. 1-8; 1:1, 7, 7:1
- a) These first eight chapters deal with building the temple and vision prophecies, during the building of the temple focusing on the remnant in the land.
- b) The simple divisions are four.
- 1)) The call to repentance. Zech. 1:1-7
- 2)) The night visions. Zech. 1:8-6:8
- 3)) The crowning King. Zech. 6:9-15
- 4)) The feast and fasting. Zech. 7-8
- * All seven visions and the one prophetic message came in one night, Feb. 24, 520 B.C. Zech. 1:7
- * The four prophetic messages, Dec. 4, 518 B.C. Zech. 7:1
- 2) The prophecies after the building of the temple, undated. Zech. 9-14
- a) These last six chapters deal with two burdens in view of the Gentile and Israel, vocal prophecies, not visions.

- b) The future concern for Israel and the Gentile nation is the focus.
- c) The simple divisions are two.
- 1)) The burden against the Gentile. Zech. 9-11
- 2)) The burden against Israel. Zech. 12-14
- 3)) The problem sometimes with God's people is that they do not resist the attacks of the enemy enough and just give in.
- 4)) The outcome of idleness is self-absorption and spiritual decay always without exception.

C. The argument of the "ten lost tribes".

1. There are those who teach that the ten tribes that went into captivity by Assyria were lost and are the British Israelites.
 - a. The greatest proponent of this teaching was Hebert. W. Armstrong leader of the World Wide Church of God in Pasadena California.
 - b. The church recanted after his death in 1986 and changed its name to Grace Communion International.
2. When Babylon conquered Assyria it absorbed the ten tribes of the Northern kingdom of Israel and Medo-Persia likewise, so that all twelve tribes were present at the end of the captivity of Babylon.

- a. The edict of Cyrus was to “all Israel”.
Ezra 1:3
- b. The houses of Judah and Benjamin and priests and the Levites, with all who spirits God had move, arose to go and build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. Ezra 1:5
- c. Those who came with Zerubbable were... The number of the people of Israel.” Ezra 2:2
- d. “So the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.” Ezra 2:70
- e. The offered sacrifices were after the number of the tribes of Israel” 12. Ezra 6:17
- f. “The heads of the fathers’ houses of Israel (12) in Jerusalem.” Ezra 8:29a
- g. “Twelves bulls for all Israel”. Ezra 8:35d
- h. The term “Jew” and “Isrealite” became synonymous during the exile, the book of Esther makes no distinction between them either. Esther 1:1; 3:8, 12, 14
- i. The New Testament commentary of this teaching is that it is wrong as James writes five and a half centuries later to “the twleve tirbes whichh are scattered abroad.” Ja. 1:1

3. The term Nethinims appears 17 times in Ezra and Nehemiah and once in First Chronicles.
 - a. All refer to the post-exilic resettlement.
 - b. They were appointed by David for the service of the Levites. Ezra 8:20
 - c. They are closely connected with an other order, “the servants of Solomon”, who seem to be descendents of the Cannanites he used in the building of the Temple, as captive foriegners. 2Chron. 2:17
 - d. At the return they are identified as a set class of helpers organized in some sort of guild under their own leader. Neh. 11:21

This is the historical background to the book of Ezra!

III. The division of the book of Ezra.

I. The return under Zerubbable. Ezra 1-6

- A. The Decree of Cyrus to Rebuild the Temple. CH. I (God Initiates)
 1. The fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy. 1:1-4 (national repatriation)
 2. The response of the fathers. Ezra 1:5-6 (reconstruction of the temple)
 3. The promises by Cyrus. Ezra 1:7-11

- B.** The daring people who returned to build. Ezra 2 (Man Responds)
1. The first group. Ezra 2:1-35 (Zerubbabel and others)
 2. The second group. Ezra 2:36-58 (priests and Levites)
 3. The third group. Ezra 2:59-63 (the rejected ones)
 4. The fourth group. Ezra. 2:64-70 (the summary statement, animals, offerings and dwelling in their cities)
- C.** The arrival at Jerusalem. Ezra 3
1. The worship restored in Jerusalem. Ezra 3:1-7
 2. The temple building overseen by Levites. Ezra 3:8-9
 3. The response of joy and weeping. Ezra 3:10-13
- D.** .The opposition to Building the Temple. Ezra 4
1. The adversaries desire to join the work denied. Ezra 4:1-3
 2. The adversaries discouraged and delayed the people building. Ezra 4:4-5
 3. The adversaries letter of accusation to cease building. Ezra 4:6-24
- E.** The prophets begin to build the Temple. Ezra 5
1. Haggai, Zechariah and prophets. Ezra 5:1-2
 2. The inquiry by the governor. Ezra 5:3-5

3. The letter sent to Darius. Ezra 5:6-17
- F.** The decree of Darius. Ezra 6
1. Records search and found the decree of Cyrus. Ezra 6:1-5
 2. Rebuke of Tattenai to not hinder work. Ezra 6:6-10
 3. Retribution for those opposing work. Ezra 6:11-12
 4. The temple completed and dedicated. Ezra 6:13-18
 5. The Passover celebrated and feast. Ezra 6:19-22
- II. The return under Ezra. Ezra 7-10**
- A.** The departure of Ezra. Ezra 7-8
1. Ezra's office and provisions. Ezra 7:1-10
 2. Ezra's letter of commendation. Ezra 7:11-28
 - 3 Spiritual reconstruction.**
 4. The heads and people who returned, Spiritual repentance. Ezra 8:1-14
 5. The servants for the temples. Ezra 8:15-20
 6. The fast and prayers for God s protection. Ezra 8:21-23
 7. The dividing of the provisions. Ezra 8:24-30
 8. The return and arrival at Jerusalem. Ezra 8:31-36
- B.** The defiance of God's People. Ezra 9
1. Ezra informed of unequally yoked. Ezra 9:1-2

2. Ezra's prayer of confession. Ezra 9:3-15
- 3 The people repent. Ezra 10: 1-4
4. The matter resolve. Ezra 10.5-17
5. The priests who had taken pagan wives.
Ezra 10:18-44

This is the division of the book of Ezra!