

Old Testament Introduction

The Book of Ezra

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- 1) The Book of Ezra is the first book of what are known as the Post-Exilic books.
_____ books = **Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther**
_____ books = **Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi**
- 2) These books are called Post-Exilic because they cover the era of Israel's history involving the return from _____ to their homeland. It is a period of _____.
- 3) A brief review of the history of God's chosen people...
 - Abraham is called. **Genesis 12:1-3 (2091 B. C.)**
 - Jacob and family go into Egypt. **(1876 B. C.)**
 - Israelites leave Egypt, led by Moses. **(1446 B. C.)**
 - Nation enters the promised land, led by Joshua. **(1406 B. C.)**
 - Saul reigns over Israel. **(1043 B. C. to 1011 B. C.)**
 - David reigns over Israel. **(1011 B.C. to 971 B. C.)**
 - Solomon reigns over Israel. **(971 B.C. to 931 B. C.)**
 - The kingdom is divided. **(931 B. C.)**
 - Israel (NK) goes into Assyrian Captivity. **(722 B. C.)**
 - Judah (SK) goes into Babylonian Captivity. **(586 B. C.)**
- 4) In the Hebrew scriptures, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah were one book called the "Book of _____." It was not until 1448 that the present division was introduced into the Hebrew scriptures. This division carried over into our English translation.
- 5) The Book of Ezra is named after its principle character, Ezra. Ezra is the Hebrew word *ezer*, and means "_____." His name, however, does not appear in the book until **7:1**.
- 6) Ezra has always been considered a key figure in Jewish history. He was a descendant of _____. (**7:1-6**)
- 7) He is also described as a "*ready scribe in the law of Moses*," which indicates that he was well-versed and skilled in the scriptures. He is also referred to as a _____. (**7:21**)

- 8) One of Ezra's key ministries was to revive the people's interest in the Scriptures. It is believed that Ezra arranged the _____, collected the books, and settled the canon of what we now have as the Old Testament Scriptures.
- 9) The Book of Ezra covers both the return of Zerubbabel with a group of Jews in 535 B.C. to rebuild the Temple, and Ezra himself leading back a group of Jews in 458 B.C.

AUTHORSHIP

- 1) **The Traditional view:** _____ was the author.
 - Much of Ezra is written in the first person (*The "I" point of view.*) (**7:25-28 & 8:15-17 & 21**)
 - **Ezra 1:1** connects the book with the last verse of **2 Chronicles**, also believed to have been written by Ezra.
 - Jewish tradition attributes the book to Ezra.
- 2) **The Critical view:** Critics view the book as being compiled at least a century or more after Ezra's time, and therefore of little historical value.

RECIPIENTS

Ezra was written to the Jews who were struggling to _____ the city of Jerusalem and _____ themselves from the surrounding enemies.

DATE OF WRITING

Sometime after **2 Chronicles**, probably between _____ B. C. and _____ B. C.

PURPOSE OF BOOK

To show how Jehovah fulfilled His _____, given through His _____, to restore Judah to her own land.

THEME OF THE BOOK

The overall theme of Ezra is the _____ of the Jews and the _____ of the Temple.

OUTLINE

- I. Return under Zerubbabel = The Restoration of the Nation's Religious Center **1-6**
- II. Return under Ezra = The Reformation of the Nation's Religious Life **7-10**