

# Ezra: The Good Hand of God

## Introduction

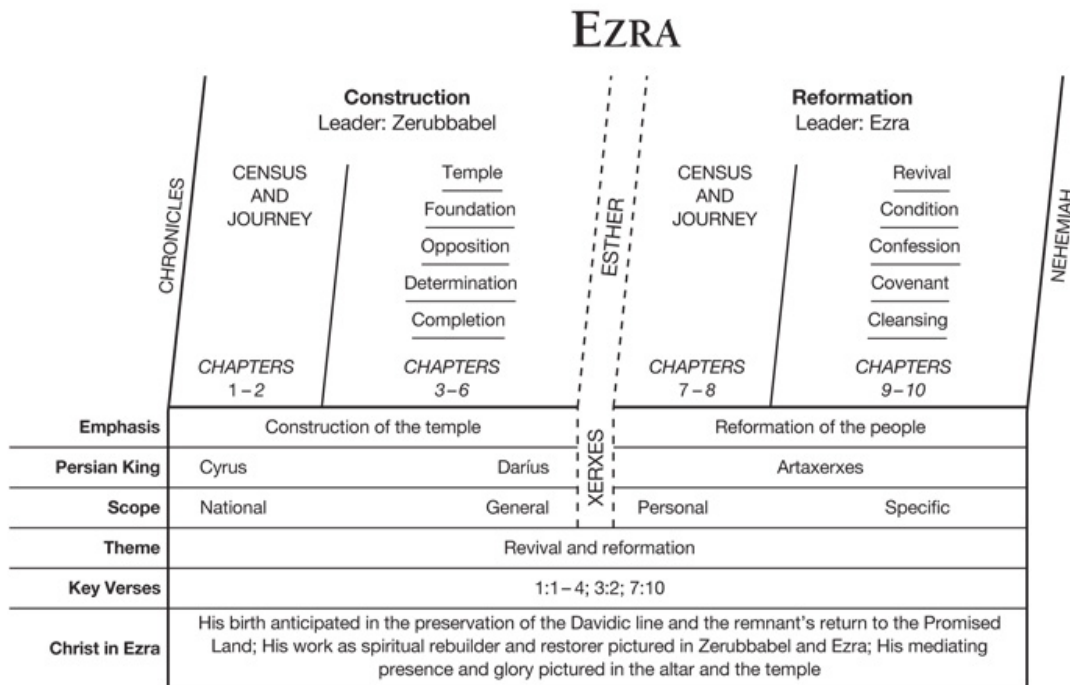
The book is named after the principal figure of the second return from Babylon. Ezra ('ezer, "help") is a shortened form of Azariah (Yahweh has helped). Ezra is sometimes called the "second lawgiver" and the "Father of Judaism." The book of Ezra is sometimes called the "second great exodus." Ezra is one of six OT post-exilic books: Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Ezra and Nehemiah were originally one book in Hebrew.

**I. The Author**—Although never specifically identified as the author, internal evidence points to Ezra as the human author. Ezra was a priest and scribe (7:21), and the author refers to himself in first person in 7:27—9:15. Hebrew tradition ascribes authorship to Ezra.

**II. The Audience**—The returned remnant from Babylon in about 450 BC.

**III. The Aim**—Ezra writes to the returned remnant who were wavering in their faithfulness to the Lord to encourage them by recording the events of the first two returns of the Jews to their land in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy (Jer 25:11; 29:10).

**IV. The Arrangement**—



# EZRA

Focus	Restoration of the Temple		Reformation of the People	
References	1:1	3:1	7:1	9:1
Division	First Return to Jerusalem	Construction of the Temple	Second Return to Jerusalem	Restoration of the People
Topic	1st Return (40,897)		2nd Return (1,754)	
Leaders	Zerubbabel		Ezra	
Time	22 years (538-516 B.C.)		1 Year (458-457 B.C.)	
Kings	Cyrus (539-530)	Darius (521-486)	Artaxerxes (464-423)	

ESTHER Xerxes  
(486-456)

## V. The Analysis

## VI. The Application

1. God moves the hearts of kings and rulers. He controls world affairs (1:1, 5; 6:22; 7:27-28)
2. God's work never occurs without opposition.
3. Generous giving is required for God's work to prosper (2:68-69)
4. One godly person who knows God and obeys His Word can impact many people.
5. After 70 years in captivity the people hadn't learned much.
6. Sin is destructive and leads to painful consequences.
7. What confession and repentance do you need?

## VII. The Assignment