

Basic Training in the Bible

Jon Crantz | Ezra

Outline of Ezra:

1. Ch. 1-6 – Exiles return and rebuild the temple
2. Ch. 7-10 – Ezra returns and the Jews reform

Key Verses: Ezra 9:8-9, 13

⁸ But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage.⁹ Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.

¹³ What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins deserved and have given us a remnant like this.

Three Major Themes:

1. God is Sovereign over all nations

God moved on the hearts and minds of three kings of Persia: Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes.

Ezra 1:1 – The Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia...

Ezra 6:22 - because the LORD had filled them with joy by changing the attitude of the king of Assyria so that he assisted them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel.

Ezra 7:27 - ²⁷ Praise be to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, who has put it into the king's heart to bring honor to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem in this way ²⁸ and who has extended his good favor to me before the king and his advisers and all the king's powerful officials.

2. God's is Faithful

Ezra 3:11 – He is good, his love toward Israel endures forever.

Ezra 9:8-9 - ⁸ But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage.⁹ Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.

3. The People are called to obey and worship

Obedience – Ezra 9:10-12- ¹⁰ “But now, our God, what can we say after this? For we have forsaken the commands ¹¹ you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: ‘The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. ¹² Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.’

Worship – Ezra 3:11-13 - And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. ¹² But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. ¹³ No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.

This Week's Readings:

Option 1: Ezra 1-10 → 2 chapters x 5 days

Option 2:

- 1-3 – Exiles return
- 4-6 – Temple is rebuilt
- 7-10 – Ezra returns