



July 7th, 2019 || **Ezra** || Return to the Land

Seeing God's Big Story, Fitting Our Story Into His Story

536 B.C.

516 B.C.

457 B.C.

444 B.C.

425 B.C.

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Return under Zerubbabel	Haggai Zechariah	Completion of Temple	Esther	Return by Ezra	Nehemiah	Malachi
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### **Historical Context**

World Power: Medo-Persia from 539 B.C. to 330 B.C. (capital in Babylon)

1st Return under Zerubbabel (536 - 516 B.C.) – Rebuilding the Temple

2nd Return under Ezra (457 B.C.) – The people are taught God's Word

3rd Return under Nehemiah (444 - 425 B.C.) – The walls are rebuilt

### **Biblical Outline**

- Ezra 1-6 - Covers the first return of Jews from captivity, led by Zerubbabel—a period of twenty-three years beginning with the edict of Cyrus of Persia and ending at the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.
- Ezra 7-10 - Picks up the story more than sixty years later. After the original remnant had stopped work on the city walls and spiritual apathy ruled, Ezra arrived with another two thousand people and sparked a spiritual revival. By the end of the book, Israel had renewed its covenant with God and had begun acting in obedience to Him.
- Nehemiah 8-10 - Ezra leads the spiritual renewal once the walls are complete. They spend a day reading the Word and explaining it to everyone. They spend a day confessing their sin before the LORD and renewing their side of the covenant to God. They repent in very tangible ways.

### **Theological Takeaways**

- God holds the hearts of kings in His hand and moves them as He wishes. (Prov. 21:1)
- Ultimately, God is in control of our stories and he has not forsaken you no matter how bad things may seem.
- God wants to see us return to a relationship with Him.
- The way that we return is to know His Word and be filled with and led by the Spirit.
- We will not have life unless we have a relationship with God.

**UP NEXT:** July 14th, 2019 – **Nehemiah** - Rebuilding the Walls