

# Why Study EZRA & NEHEMIAH? PART 1

Even in biblical history, some people don't get the recognition they deserve. Ezra (a priest) and Nehemiah (a businessman) were two men God greatly used at a pivotal time in Israel's history. They were heroes of the faith. Their books, Ezra and Nehemiah, should be read together (like 1 & 2 Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles) because they worked together to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, city, and temple after the Babylonian captivity.

*“Revival will come only as people come back to the Word of God.”*

—Dr. J. Vernon McGee

## WHAT HAPPENED WHEN?


The events of Ezra and Nehemiah took place in a significant time in world history. The spiritual and cultural dynamics of this last century of the Old Testament demand a closer look at the books of the Bible in context with global history. God's hand was moving among men—and man's heart was moving either toward or away from God's heart.

### Global History

### Biblical History

587 B.C. Babylon Empire captures Israel	587 B.C. Daniel among those exiled to Babylon
539 B.C. Babylon is captured by Persian king, Cyrus the Great	539 B.C. Israel captives released to return home
528 B.C. Buddhism founded in India	538 B.C. Zerubbabel leads 1 <sup>st</sup> return of Jews from exile (builds 2 <sup>nd</sup> temple, 515 B.C.)
510 B.C. Roman republic established	520 B.C. Books of Haggai and Zechariah written
495 B.C. Greek mathematician Pythagoras dies in Italy	
479 B.C. Confucius dies in China	478 B.C. Esther becomes queen in Persia
470 B.C. Socrates is born in Greece	458 B.C. Ezra leads the 2 <sup>nd</sup> return of Jews from exile (reestablishes Torah and worship)
447 B.C. Construction begins on the Parthenon, Athens	445 B.C. Nehemiah leads the 3 <sup>rd</sup> return of Jews from exile (rebuilds walls)
*all dates approximate	444 B.C. Probable writing of books of Ezra and Nehemiah
	397 B.C. Book of Malachi written
	—END OF OLD TESTAMENT AND 400 YEARS OF SILENCE—

*Then everyone . . . trembled at the words of the God of Israel . . . —Ezra 9:4*

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