

Ezra 1

King James Version (KJV)

(Ezra was of the Tribe of Levi – approximately 426BC

Ezdrus in the Septuagint.

Nehemiah was of the tribe of Judah.

Ezra was written in Hebrew except for 4:8 through 6:18 which are written in the Aramaic or Chaldee language.

In the Manuscripts, the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah are one book. It is unknown which book came first – maybe at the same time. These Books deal with the rebuilding of the Temple when the Israelites were allowed to return to Judah, after the 70 year captivity by Babylon. These Books are about the return of Judah, Benjamin and Levi to Jerusalem and the surrounding region after Cyrus of Persia allowed them to go)

(Ezra deals with rebuilding the temple; Nehemiah deals with repairing Jerusalem)

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Jeremiah-29:10-14 (For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive)

²Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build

him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. (Cyrus was one of 4 people named by God, 137 years before he was born. God used Cyrus, king of Persia, to fulfill His plan for Israel. Cyrus was a good and humble man before God, although he was a heathen king)

³ Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. (Who is there) see 2Chronicles-36:23

The question is answered in Mathew-2:2 (The wise men from the east asked – Where is HE)

⁴ And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. (Those of you who remain here; you are the neighbors of those that are going to rebuild the temple. Help them with gold, silver, animals and goods so that they will be successful – better translation)

⁵ Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.

(We will see later in chapter 8 that there were also Nethinim – given to service. These were heathen people who infiltrated the temple as servers, and later the priesthood. They were not of Levi, therefore, not appointed by God)

⁶ And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. (People contributed, as the king had asked)

⁷ Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; (Cyrus returned the temple vessels to them)

NOTE: (In the Book of Daniel-5, Belshazzar, grandson to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, brought these vessels to a drunken party. He used the vessels to make toasts to the gods of metal, fire, ect. – all Babylonian deities. This was an insult to almighty God. God ended

both Belshazzar and Babylon that night. Those who mock God will be held accountable)

⁸ Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. (He numbered them because good accounting prevents theft)

(Some scholars think that Sheshbazzar was Nehemiah; others think that he was Zerubbabel. Both were of the tribe of Judah)

⁹ And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, (These were to be used by the priests in the temple)

¹⁰ Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand.

¹¹ All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem. (All these items were made when Solomon built the original temple. They were taken when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Judah. Cyrus returned them all)