

# STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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## OLD TESTAMENT FLYOVER:

At perhaps no time in the long history of Israel and Judah was a theological explanation of the condition of God's elect people more necessary and more in order than that of the post-exilic period in which Ezra and Nehemiah provided leadership. Ezra, the priest and scribe, functioned in those capacities but also politically; Nehemiah, governor of the restored community, exercised his office but also supplied spiritual authority and direction. Together they demonstrated that the kingdom of God could not be bifurcated between the secular and the sacred. If God's covenant promises were to find authentic fulfillment, the re-gathered and reconstituted Jewish state must conform in all its aspects to its covenant mandate and responsibilities.... In conclusion, the overriding theological concern of Ezra-Nehemiah was for the restoration of the postexilic Jewish community to a position of covenant purity and faithfulness so that it might take up and perpetuate its God-given privilege and task of mediating his salvific intentions to the whole world. Despite its failure in doing so as a community, Ezra and Nehemiah helped establish the conditions that could prepare the way for the One who, in the fullness of time, brought to pass the hopes and dreams of these mighty reformers.

Eugene H. Merrill, "The Book of Ezra-Nehemiah," in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), 351-53.

## Ezra-Nehemiah

### I. Introduction

Despite its rather sparse treatment in today's churches, Ezra-Nehemiah represents one of the most important books in the OT. In it, we find the realization of the promises God made to Israel to return them to the land and reestablish them after their time in exile. Often, the book is viewed primarily as a source of lessons on effective leadership, its theological roots go much deeper than this, and its contribution both to OT theology as well as our understanding of biblical chronology and OT history are indispensable.

#### A. *Title and Unity*

Significant debate exists in the relationship between Ezra and Nehemiah. The titles in our Protestant Bible identify these books as two separate literary units—Ezra and Nehemiah. This perspective is derived from the tradition reflected in the Latin Vulgate and developed by the Roman Catholic tradition, where the books are respectively titled 1 & 2 Esdras. For all accounts and purposes, these books are viewed today by a great many be-

lievers, both scholars and laity as two distinct, albeit related, literary works. The reasons for this are understandable. Nehemiah 1:1 begins with an introduction which seems to indicate the beginning of a new work. Additionally, the two books appear to incorporate unique terms and styles of language, distinct ideologies, and include a nearly identical genealogy (Ezra 2 & Neh 7) which suggests that the two were written independently.

Yet we must consider the fact that the Vulgate's decision to separate these books and title them individually represents a dramatic shift from earlier traditions on the books. In fact, a large segment of scholarship considers these "books" to actually be a single unified work. There are a number of reasons why we might consider the books to be actually one large work:

1. *Masoretic Tradition*

The Masoretic Tradition, reflected by both ancient manuscripts and modern Hebrew bibles, either title work "Ezra" or "Ezra-Nehemiah," indicating that the ancient Masoretic tradition viewed the books as a unified work.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the Masoretes calculated the number of verses in the book by combining Ezra and Nehemiah, identified the center of work as Neh 3:22-23, and provided notations only at the end of Nehemiah.

2. *LXX*

Likewise, the LXX preserves this unity by entitling the book "2 Esdras" (where 1 Esdras is an apocryphal work).

3. *Early Jewish and Christian Traditions*

The ancient Jewish rabbis, reflected in the writings, of Josephus (A.D. 90), Melito (A.D. 175), and the Babylonian Talmud (A.D. 500), as well as Medieval Jewish commentators all considered it one book, (see *Baba Bathra* 14b, 15a). Likewise, the earliest church fathers also count the books as one unit.<sup>2</sup>

4. *Internal Thematic Unity*

Yet beyond this, there is a clear sense of thematic unity which undergirds this tradition. The "twentieth year" cited in Neh 1:1 assumes the reader's ability to easily access Ezra 7:7, and Nehemiah's shock at the derelict condition of Jerusalem's walls assumes prior knowledge of the rebuilding program initiated earlier and referenced in Ezra 4:12 and 4:23. Nehemiah 8:1's description of Ezra and the bringing of the "Book of the Law" rests upon the earlier description of Ezra in 7:1-10. Additionally, both books focus on the themes of separation from foreigners and the issues that arose concerning the temple rebuilding and installation.

When all these factors are considered, there is strong evidence to support our consideration that Ezra and Nehemiah were produced not as two independent literary works but ra-

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<sup>1</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, "The Book of Ezra-Nehemiah," in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), 343; Israel Loken, *Ezra & Nehemiah*, EEC (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Loken, "Ezra & Nehemiah."

ther were edited together in such a way as to provide a two-part literary work describing the return from exile and reestablishment of the Jewish theocracy.

In the end, the matter of unity versus disunity is not theologically significant. However, like the question of the unity of the Torah, one's understanding of how the books relate may have some effect on interpretive decisions. For the purposes of this study, we will assume that Ezra and Nehemiah comprise one literary unit.

### B. *Authorship*

Related to the discussion of unity is the topic of authorship. Ancient Jewish tradition reflected in the Talmud holds that Ezra was responsible for the book(s) of Ezra-Nehemiah, while Nehemiah is identified as the author of Chronicles (*Baba Bathra* 15a). This introduces a long-standing position that Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah were the work of a singular author—referred to as the Chronicler—or at the very least, that these books comprise one large literary unity. Given the similarities between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, it is understandable how this view has persisted. Both emphasize David and his dynasty, the cult, and the use of genealogies. Yet much work has been produced demonstrating the distinctness of these books and the unlikelihood of literary unity let alone authorship.

Regarding Ezra and Nehemiah, the two books could not be more different when it comes to internal details on authorship. Ezra contains not even a hint as to authorship, save for a smattering of first-person pronouns from the lips of Ezra (7:28; 8:15-17, 21-22, 24-26, 28; 9:3-6). While some commentators hold that the entirety of the book was composed by Ezra,<sup>3</sup> others suggest that the lack of explicit authorial reference limits our confidence of Ezra's authorship to only certain portions of the book. As Merrill summarizes, "All that may be suggested here is that the overall composition includes a document originally drafted by Ezra, one described by some scholars as the 'Ezra Memoir.' This may be limited to 7:27-9:15."<sup>4</sup> Yet to this Merrill cautions that "Given the penchant in Hebrew discourse for an author to speak of himself in the third person, however, it is risky to draw too many conclusions from this data."<sup>5</sup>

Nehemiah, on the other hand, presents itself as almost completely a product of Nehemiah, except for perhaps 8:1-12:30 and 12:44-47. In the end, if Ezra and Nehemiah were independently responsible for producing these two works, then this would give support for viewing the books as independent narratives. But it is entirely possible that a third-party editor/narrator may have been involved. As Merrill concludes, "What can be said is that it is unlikely that either Ezra or Nehemiah wrote the total works bearing their names, but that each made some original contributions which became part of the whole corpus as shaped by some anonymous author."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Merrill, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 346.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

### C. *Historical Background*

The fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 B.C. naturally forms the backdrop for the events recorded in Ezra-Nehemiah. Beginning in 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar made the first of three invasions of Judah, finally sacking the city of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., killing the majority of its population and deporting the rest to Babylon (roughly 25,000 total were taken to Babylon in the three deportations). The Chaldeans also leveled the temple and royal palace, and looted both.

According to Jeremiah's words, the exiles were to spend 70 years in exile. Nearly two centuries before, he had given them hope that they would once again return to the land. As Babylon fell to the Medo-Persian empire, the hopes and aspirations of the Jewish population finally were realized. Cyrus the Great, a brilliant political and psychological tactician, dramatically altered the Jew's fate with his newly established policy of allowing foreign captives to return to their homeland and reestablish their political and religious structures. In 538 B.C., he decreed that the Jews could return to their land, and commanded that their efforts be facilitated with the resources of the empire.

Yet while Cyrus credited his newfound benevolence to Marduk's calling, the biblical historians recognized that these decisions were the result of God's sovereign work. Isaiah had identified Cyrus as Yahweh's "shepherd" (44:28) and "anointed" (45:1) whom he would use to bring the Jews back to their land and rebuild the temple and city. We see this fact recognized by Ezra as well (Ezra 1:1-3), who interpreted Cyrus' decree and the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy.

The land of Judah and the city of Jerusalem, however, had changed immensely in those 70 years of exile. After probably months of preparation, the first wave of Jews (52,000) returned to Palestine and under the leadership of Joshua and Zerubbabel, a new altar was constructed atop the ruins of the previous one. There, the people celebrated the first Feast of Tabernacles since their exile. They then began in the second month of 536 B.C. to lay the foundations of the new temple, an event which elicited both joy and sorrow among the returnees. Indeed, the meager temple edifice that was established was a mere shadow of the glory of the Solomonic complex that had been destroyed.

Immediately, the people met their most relentless obstacle—the Samaritans. These people were representatives of those Jews who had remained in Palestine during the exile, and who had subsequently entered into mixed marriages with peoples who had been transplanted by Assyria from the northern kingdom. The product was a mixed race with a syn-



**Figure 1: The Cyrus Cylinder**

**The Cylinder of Cyrus the Great is an clay cylinder discovered in the ancient ruins of Babylon. Dating to the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., the cylinder contains a declaration composed in Akkadian cuneiform script in commemoration of Cyrus' defeat of Babylon. Among other historical details, the text includes documentation of Cyrus' repatriation of foreign captives and religious institutions and is an important artifact corroborating the OT record concerning Cyrus' decree releasing the Jewish people to return and rebuild Jerusalem.**

cretistic religion that was outwardly Yahwistic but was, in fact, essentially pagan.<sup>7</sup> The Samaritans had apparently heard of the reconstruction efforts and voiced their desire to participate and reestablish their relationship with the covenant community. Yet the leaders of the returned exiled, perhaps recognizing the impurity of their cultic system, refused their request, and the result was a forceful and effective campaign by the Samaritans to impede the construction work.

The newly-established Persian king Darius did a thorough investigation of the Samaritan's allegations and arrived at the conclusion that the Jews had indeed had the right to rebuild under Cyrus' edict. Thus, he intervened on behalf of the Jews and issued his own edict, commanding the Samaritans not to impede the reconstruction efforts (Ezra 6:6-12). The temple was finally completed in 515 B.C., 25 years after the project initiated (Ezra 6:15), and the people celebrated with an observance of the Passover feast.

From this point, there is no historical documentation to narrate the events after the temple was completed. The next documented event is the events of Esther under the reign of Xerxes (486-465 B.C.). Following these events and the establishment of the Feast of Purim, the events of Ezra 7-10 initiate when Ezra traveled from Babylon to Jerusalem, leading a group of 2,000 Jewish returnees (458 B.C.). Authorized by Artaxerxes, Ezra returned with the specific mission of restoring proper worship of Yahweh. Before this could happen, Ezra first had to confront the issue of mixed marriages among the newly established Palestinian community, for not only the laity but the priests and Levites as well had entered into marriage with the pagan peoples around them, an act which constituted a substantial breach in covenant faithfulness (cf. Deut 7:3). Despite Yahweh's faithfulness to preserve a remnant of Israel throughout the exile, the people had already begun to defile themselves and spurn the covenant, an act which brought Ezra great sorrow as he prayed to God (Ezra 9:3-15). The people responded as Ezra had hoped. They repented, reaffirmed their covenant commitment, and vowed to end their impure marriages (10:1-8).

Yet by the time of the third return, led by Nehemiah in 445 B.C., the intermarriage issue had resurfaced. His return was prompted by a report he had received while fulfilling his duties as royal cupbearer in Susa that the walls around Jerusalem were in shambles (Neh 1:1). This came as a surprise to Nehemiah, who doubtless had heard of the former construction of these walls under Ezra's leadership (Ezra 4:12, 23). His close and personal relationship with Artaxerxes, and the precarious situations facing the king at the time, led the king to allow Nehemiah to return and stabilize things in Palestine, even offering aid for construction (Neh 2:7-8). Nehemiah arrived to find the city in even worse condition than anticipated, made worse by the opposition facing the Jews from the surrounding peoples, who viewed Judah's reestablishment as a powerful rival and threat to their own establishments.

After conducting a thorough survey of the city, Nehemiah and his leaders began their construction plans. In response, the surrounding peoples, led by Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, attempted to impede their work first by derision and then by formal complaint

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<sup>7</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 506.

to Persia, charging the Jews with disloyalty. Their opposition eventually escalated to involve an assassination plot against Nehemiah, who refused to show cowardice before the Jewish people and so demoralize them. Their construction campaign was completed in 52 days, and their success caused their detractors to cease (6:16).

After the walls were complete and the city was secure, Nehemiah began a series of extensive governmental reorganizing. Economic issues plagued the land, so that the poorer classes had been forced to sell their sons and daughters into slavery in order to pay off creditors who had loaned them money to buy food (5:6-8). All of this was the fruit of deep spiritual issues, especially among the wealthy Jews, who seemed to show no compassion on the less fortunate among their brethren. In addition to these things, Nehemiah also began plans to redistribute the peoples throughout the land and relocate Jerusalem-ites to the city.

When the time of the autumn festivals arrived, Nehemiah assembled all the people. On the first day of the new year, Ezra read the law to the people while the Levites explained its meaning (7:73-8:3). The people responded with weeping, but Nehemiah encouraged them to rejoice. After celebrating the Feast of Booths, they participated in a special ceremony where they renewed their covenant commitment (Neh 9).

Nehemiah remained in Jerusalem for 12 years, then returned to Susa briefly, only to come back to Palestine and discover that Eliashab and Tobiah used their relationships with Jerusalem's high-profile families to infiltrate the Jewish cult. Nehemiah ordered them to be thrown out. Yet more problems had surfaced during his brief return to Susa. The Levites were being neglected, the Sabbath was being violated, and intermarriage had once again returned among the community. Nehemiah addressed these issues as well, initiating sweeping changes and challenging the intermarriage issue head on.

## II. Major Themes

### A. *The Sovereignty of Yahweh*

The narratives give crystal-clear evidence of their confidence in Yahweh's sovereign effecting of the events in the book. In fact, the language used throughout the book points to God's control of all events. Eight times the narrative references "the hand of God" (Ezra 7:6, 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31; Neh 2:8, 18). We see God...

- raising up and overseeing the leaders of the Jewish returnees (Ezra 5:5)
- stirring up the heart of Cyrus to liberate the Jewish exiles (Ezra 1:1, 5)
- causing the people to rejoice and turning the heart of Assyria's king to support the temple rebuilding (Ezra 6:22)
- frustrating the plans of Israel's enemies (Neh 4:15)
- demoralizing Israel's enemies and causing them to recognize that the Jews had accomplished their plans with God's help (Neh 6:16)
- working in the heart of the people to assemble the leadership (Neh 7:5)
- called to remember Nehemiah as he led the people toward covenant faithfulness (Neh 13:14, 22, 31)

Thus, we see in this book not just the sovereignty of God displayed over the return of the Jews to Palestine but his control even over the Gentile rulers who exercise authority over

the Jewish people. Even when Israel's enemies rise up and attempt to thwart their efforts, God intervenes, even if through the decrees of Persian kings. The book points the reader to the fact that the heart of the king, whether Jewish or Gentile, is under the sovereign hand of God.

### B. *Theocracy and Gentile Oversight*

The book of Ezra-Nehemiah continues the theme established in Daniel—that Israel has entered a new era of redemptive history. Through the rebuilding of the temple and Jerusalem's walls and the reinstatement of the priesthood, theocracy had been reestablished. Theocracy refers to God's rule over Israel. But this theocracy was new—it was different than the theocracy that was exercised before the exile. God's pre-exilic ruler was mediated through the law, through the priesthood, through the prophets, and through the king. But in Ezra-Nehemiah, there is no longer a king over Israel. They still have the law, priests, and prophets, but they lack a king.

Instead, God's executive rule over Israel is now mediated through Gentile kings. As it follows, everything that happens to Israel throughout the book occurs through the decree of a Gentile, whether their return through Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-4), the interruption of temple construction through Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:17-24), the resumption of construction through Darius (Ezra 6:1-12), or the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls through Artaxerxes (Neh 2:6-8). Even the Jew's responsibility to carry out the Mosaic ordinances is given royal authority (Ezra 7:11-25).

### C. *The Temple & Jerusalem*

A sizable portion of the book deals extensively with the construction and reinstatement of the temple in Jerusalem. Given the focus on the reinstatement of God's theocracy over Israel, this emphasis is understandable.

Before the exile, the temple stood as the central symbol of Israel's theocracy. Yahweh lived there and his people communed with him there. It was not only an important geopolitical structure with direct ties to the Davidic dynasty, it was also a theologically critical aspect of God's covenant relationship to the nation. It symbolized God's unique presence among Israel and his ruler over them.

The Babylonian exile had devastated these expressions of Israelite spiritual and theological life. They endured for 70 years with the hope that their restoration to the land would also include the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple (Isa 44:28). For this reason, Ezra-Nehemiah forms a significant theological assertion narrating God's faithfulness not only to return the people but to reinstate the temple structure and Jerusalem's political and spiritual vitality.

Virtually all of Ezra is concerned with the temple itself, while Nehemiah fluctuates between an emphasis on Jerusalem and the temple. Both include passages outlining ceremonies of dedication and the joy of the people at the completion of the temple project (Ezra 6:16-18; Neh 12:40-43). Merrill summarizes the sentiment of the people in this way:

The temple was completed in 515, the sixth year of Darius, which was twenty-five years after its foundations were laid (Ezra 6:15). This date marks the end of Jeremiah's "seventy years" in a cultic sense, for as long as Yahweh had no earthly dwelling place in Jerusalem, his peo-

ple likewise could never truly be at home. Although the Shechinah, as a feature reserved for the end of the age, did not come into evidence again with the completion of the temple, the people nevertheless rejoiced in God's goodness and dedicated the temple with effusive praise and a generous offering.<sup>8</sup>

#### D. *The Law*

The law forms another central feature of Ezra-Nehemiah and another expression of God's theocratic rule. Even more than the reestablishment of the temple and Jerusalem, the book concerns itself with the reestablishment of the covenant community. To a certain degree, the covenant between God and Israel experienced a sort of hiatus during captivity. While we see faithful Jews such as Daniel committed to living in covenant faithfulness, the uniqueness of Israel's role as mediators of Yahweh's salvific intentions to the world had been paused.

But the return posed a significant opportunity to restore the nation to its former function and stature, and the law was central to this purpose. In it, the covenant stipulations were clearly laid out detailing how Israel was to live and how they were to approach God.

Thus, we see the introduction of Israel's key spiritual leaders. Ezra is introduced as "a scribe skilled in the law of Moses" (Ezra 7:6), and one who "had set his heart to study the law of Yahweh and to practice it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel" (7:10). He returned to Palestine with the specific intention of restoring proper worship and covenant conduct among the returnees. His reading and exposition of the law was a crucial event in post-exilic reforms among Israel (Neh 8-9).

Nehemiah, too, was key in the reestablishment of covenant authority among the people. His reforms among the people and his leadership in covenant renewal were directly influenced by the theological and spiritual import of the law on the nation.

#### E. *The Sin and Confession of the People*

The antithesis of all that was being accomplished among the Jewish returnees was the repeated impurity that infected the people during these years. Despite their full knowledge that covenant sin had led to their exile in the first place, the repatriated Jews continued to manifest a sense of spiritual hardness. Directly following Ezra's arrival and the return of the treasures to the temple, the narrator introduces several spiritual problems within the community, the chief of which concerned mixed marriages between Jews and Gentiles (9:1-10:4).

Ezra's response was severe and dramatic. He tore his robes and wept bitterly in recognition of the significance of these issues, particularly in light of all that Yahweh had done to restore the nation to the land. He then mandated that these unions be dissolved. The people responded to Ezra's rebuke with heartfelt confession and this part of the story ends with the people obeying Ezra's instructions (10:5-44).

When Nehemiah arrived to address the structural issues plaguing Jerusalem's walls, he also discovered internal problems as well. The wealthy among the people were exacting

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 508.

usury from their fellow Jews (5:1-13), and he moved to correct these social issues, recognizing their spiritual roots.

Following the covenant renewal ceremony, where the people repented of their sin and re-committed themselves to covenant loyalty, Nehemiah returned briefly to Susa only to return and find more problems had arrived. Israel's enemies had been given safe haven among the leaders and even had access to the priesthood (13:4-9, 28-31), the Levites were being neglected (13:10-14), the Sabbath had become a commercialized (13:15-22), and the issue of intermarriage with Gentiles had reemerged (13:23-27). All of this constituted defiant treachery against the covenant that Nehemiah had just reinstated.

Thus, as a whole, despite the efforts of such stalwart spiritual leaders as Ezra and Nehemiah, the narrative makes clear that the community that returned to Palestine failed to live up to their covenant obligations. As a nation, the exile did not affect the kind of spiritual transformation that it should have.

### III. Purpose

Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah—all godly men whom God used to reestablish the theocracy. Through them the temple was rebuilt, the walls of Jerusalem were restored, the worship at the temple was reestablished, and the law was taught. Yet despite all this, it is clear that the Abrahamic Covenant had not yet been fulfilled, for Israel was not faithful and had been enslaved to a Gentile nation (Neh 9).

Thus, the covenant which they made was a re-pledging to the Mosaic Covenant. The post-exilic Jews understood that the Abrahamic Covenant was alive and well, and yet Israel had been unfaithful. The contention of the book is that Israel never really became a believing nation, although there are individual believers. Yahweh is faithful to the Abrahamic Covenant. Israel remains unfaithful to the Mosaic Covenant.

Thus, the problem is not God. The problem is Israel's unfaithfulness. God continues to ruler over and protect his people. But two things are clear from the book: (1) God's ruler over his people has fundamentally changed; (2) Israel's hearts have remained the same.

Thus, the purpose of the book can be summarized as follows: *Although Yahweh sovereignly reestablished the theocracy under godly leadership during the time of Gentile oversight and oppression, the sons of Israel failed to follow Yahweh.*

### IV. Literary Structure

Little consensus has emerged over the structure of Ezra-Nehemiah, most significantly because of the disparate views over the book's unity. When viewed from a macro-perspective, the book as a whole can be structured in this way:

The Return Under Sheshbazzar / Zerubbabel	The Return Under Ezra	The Return Under Nehemiah	The Failure of the People
<i>Jeremiah</i> 1:1	<i>Request</i> 7:6	<i>Moses</i> 1:8	<i>Remember Me</i> 13:14,22,31
<i>Support</i> 1:4	<i>King</i> 7:6,12	<i>Request</i> 2:4	
<i>Tyrians</i> 3:7		<i>King</i> 2:1ff	
E/1 - E/6	E/7 - E/10	N/1 - N/13:3	N/13:4
538 - 515 B.C.	458 - 457 B.C.	445 - 433 B.C.	ca. 430-25 B.C.

Moving deeper into the structures of each major section, book can be further outlined as follows:<sup>9</sup>

## **Ezra**

- I. Return from Exile (chs. 1-2)**
  - A. Proclamation of Permission (ch. 1)
  - B. List of Returnees (ch. 2)
- II. Rebuilding of Cultus and Community (chs. 3-6)**
  - A. Preparation for Rebuilding (ch. 3)
  - B. Opposition to Rebuilding (ch. 4)
  - C. Continuation of Rebuilding (ch. 5)
  - D. Completion of Rebuilding (ch. 6)
- III. Return of Ezra (chs. 7-8)**
  - A. Arrangements for His Return (ch. 7)
  - B. Entourage with His return (ch. 8)
- IV. Ministry of Ezra (chs. 9-10)**
  - A. Sin of the People (9:1-4)
  - B. Ezra's Prayer for the People (9:5-15)
  - C. Ezra's Leadership in Reformation (ch. 10)

<sup>9</sup> Outline adapted from Merrill, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 347-48.

**Nehemiah**

- V. Nehemiah's Dilemma (ch. 1)**
  - A. Report of Jerusalem's Condition (1:1-3)
  - B. Nehemiah's Prayer (1:4-11)
- VI. Nehemiah's Plan (ch. 2)**
  - C. His Request of the King (2:1-8)
  - D. His Return to Jerusalem and Plan to Rebuild (2:9-20)
- VII. Nehemiah's Building (chs. 3-4)**
  - E. His Organization (ch. 3)
  - F. His Opposition (ch. 4)
- VIII. Nehemiah's Domestic Reforms (ch. 5)**
- IX. Nehemiah's Determination (6:1-7:4)**
- X. List of Returnees (7:5-73a)**
- XI. Covenant Renewal (7:73b-10:39)**
  - G. Its Preparations (7:73b-9:4)
  - H. Its Proclamation (9:5-10:27)
  - I. Its Stipulations (10:28-39)
- XII. Rededication of Jerusalem (11:1-13:3)**
  - J. Lists of People and Priests (11:1-12:26)
  - K. Ceremony of Celebration (12:27-13:3)
- XIII. Return to Former Sins and Second Reformation (13:4-31)**