

# VIA EMMAUS: A CHRIST-CENTERED WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

## Ezra: Return, Rebuild, Renew, Repent (17)

### OVERVIEW

<b>Genesis 1-11:</b>	The Beginning of It All
<b>Genesis 12-50:</b>	Four Families Under the Faithfulness of God
<b>Exodus 1-15:</b>	Salvation Through Substitution & Conquest
<b>Exodus 16-40:</b>	Moving Into the Presence of God
<b>Leviticus:</b>	Sinners in the Presence of a Holy God
<b>Numbers:</b>	In the Wilderness
<b>Deuteronomy:</b>	God's Royal Covenant with Israel
<b>Joshua:</b>	Into the Land
<b>Judges:</b>	A People in Need of a King
<b>Ruth:</b>	A Painful & Pleasant Providence
<b>1 Samuel:</b>	The Good, The Bad, and the Ruddy
<b>2 Samuel:</b>	The Rise and Fall of King David
<b>1-2 Kings:</b>	Redemptive History is a Royal Mess (Parts 1-2)

Covenantal Period	People	Place	Rule / Blessing
<b>Creation</b>	Adam & Eve	Eden	<b>Order:</b> God + Man + Creation (1) Expand the Garden (2) Multiply Image of God (3) Enjoy God-Man-Creation
<b>FALL</b> (1) Curse (2) Promise	<b>DEATH</b> (1) Seed of the Serpent (2) Seed of the Woman	<b>OUT OF EDEN</b> (1) East of Eden (2) New Eden	<b>DISORDER</b> (1) Lawlessness (2) Calling on the Lord (4:26)
<b>Re-Creation</b> (Noah)	Noah and his family	Ark	Repopulate + Redominate
<b>Abraham</b> (12:1-3; 15; 17; 22)	Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Brothers	Canaan → Egypt	Promise: People, Place, Blessing
<b>Sinai</b> (Exod 19:5-6)	Israel	Egypt → Wilderness → Canaan	The Law
<b>David</b> (2 Sam 7)	Royal Line of David	Canaan → Exile	Royal Enforcement of the Law
<b>New</b> (Jer 31; Isa 53-55; Ezek 36-37)	Remnant of Judah → Jesus → Church	Exile → New Exodus	All Spiritual Blessings in Christ (Eph 1:3; 2 Cor 1:20)

Chart adapted from Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991).

### EZRA

<b>1-2 Chronicles:</b>	Cyrus Edict (2 Chron 36:22-23 = Ezra 1:1-2); Both books focus on Jerusalem / Temple Chronicles focuses on the priesthood, Ezra on the law
<b>Ezra-Nehemiah:</b>	Originally One Book; Cover roughly 100 years; Last period of inspired writings

### Timeline:

<b>539</b>	Cyrus captures Babylon (Dan 5:30-31)	<b>516</b>	Temple building completed (6:15)
<b>537</b>	Jewish exiles return to Jerusalem (1:11)		<i>Silent Period</i>
<b>537</b>	Altar rebuilt (3:1-2)	<b>458</b>	Ezra departs from Babylon (7:6-9)
<b>536</b>	Temple building begins (3:8)	<b>458</b>	Men assemble in Jerusalem (10:9)
<b>520</b>	Temple building resumes (5:2; Hag 1:14)	<b>457</b>	Investigation of illegal marriages (10:16-17)

## THE PATTERN OF SALVATION IN EZRA-NEHEMIAH

- (1) God appoints deliverers – Cyrus; (1:1; cf. Isa 45:1); Darius (6:22), Artaxerxes (7:27); Ezra (7:6, 9, 28)
- (2) God leads his people on an exodus into the promised land (1:1-2:70; 8:21-23, 31)
- (3) The goal of the exodus is dwelling with God, worship, and temple-building (3:1-6:22; 8:35-36)
- (4) The pattern of life is with God in the Land – Faith and Repentance (7:1-10:44)

## THE RETURN HOME (EZRA 1:1-2:70)

- Cyrus** (ch. 1) God stirred up this Persian king to be the deliver of Israel (cf. **Jer 25:11ff; Isa 44:24-45:13**)  
Like Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, and Artaxerxes – God turns the hearts of kings (**Prov 21:1**)  
Cyrus' decree initiates the return to Israel (**1:1-4**) – God also stirred up Jewish leaders (**1:5-11**)
- Census** (ch. 2) The exiles return home – People (**1:5**) / Place (**2:1**) / Inheritance (**2:59ff**)  
Focus on the temple: priests (**2:36**), Levites (**2:40**), servants (**2:43**), assembly (**2:64-70**)

## REBUILDING THE TEMPLE (EZRA 3:1-6:22)

- Altar** (ch. 3) Israel's return begins with worship and reconstructing the dwelling place of God  
Zurubabel, a royal figure builds the Temple (**3:2, 8**) – but he is only a governor, not a king  
Great and Joyful Celebration (**3:10-13**), BUT 'old men... wept... when they saw the foundation'
- Opposition** (ch. 4-5) Like in every age of the church, God's people face opposition and adversity – *competing seeds*
- Enemies tactics** (1) Deceit (**4:1-3**); Discouragement (**4:4-5**); Menacing Diplomacy (**4:6ff**)
- God's tactics** The Preached Word = Haggai & Zechariah (**5:1-2**)  
Led to humble repentance for sin (**5:12**) & confidence in God (**5:1, 17**)  
God is at work in Darius' life (cf. **Daniel 6**) – *He turned his heart (6:22)*
- Temple Rebuilt...** (ch. 6) Darius conducts a search in archives... makes a decree to finance building (**6:6ff**)  
Celebrating Passover and Joyful Worship (**6:19-22**)
- Lessons** (1) God uses infinite resources to secure the **JOY** of his people  
(2) God's ways are not the ways of the world  
(3) Opposition is to be expected & God's Word is singular weapon

## COVENANT RENEWAL (7:1-8:36)

- God's Role** Raises up two leaders  
**Ezra:** God's hand was upon him (v. 6, 9, 28), gave him the law (v. 14) – *Chronicler?*  
**Artaxerxes:** "The king of kings decree..." (v. 11-26); God turned his heart (v. 27)
- Man's Role** Fulfilling the will of God  
**Artaxerxes:** Gave freedom (**7:13-20**), protection + materials (**7:21-26**), emphasized law  
**Ezra:** Teacher: Genuine Priest (**7:1-5**); Committed to the law (**7:6, 11, 14**); Taught (**7:10, 25**)  
Leader: Invites Levites to teach (**8:15-20**); Fasting & Prayer (**8:21-23**); Worship (**8:35-36**)

## CORPORATE REPENTANCE (9:1-10:44)

- Prayer** (ch. 9) Ezra identifies himself with the people (**9:6-9**) – *We can seek pardon for "our" sins (cf. Job)*  
Three Things to Learn: God's favor/faithfulness (**9:8-9**)  
Israel's Lawlessness & Covenant Breaking (**9:10-12**)  
God's mercy (**9:13**; see Lamentations) & God's justice (**9:15**)
- Repentance** (ch. 10) Prompted by Ezra (10:1), Israel repents and renews their covenant with God  
The covenant renewal is both a verbal oath and an ethical evaluation of their lives before God