

THE LIFE OF EZRA

12 May 2023

INTRODUCTION: When we read the book of Ezra, we may question why God named the book after Ezra the priest, a scribe in the Law of Moses. God must have seen something in Ezra that was more important than all the impressive things that were accomplished in these ten chapters. We will investigate to find out.

- Other books of the bible are named after a man or a woman. Their name is found in the first chapter. See Joshua, Ruth, 1 Samuel, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Nehemiah, Ezekiel, etc., and they remain a prominent figure throughout the book.

Chpt. 1	Cyrus, Jeremiah, God, Israel, and Benjamin are found in this chapter. Ezra is not.
Chpt. 2	42,000 people are mentioned (vs 64). At least 130 are named. Ezra is not one of them.
Chpt 3	The altar is rebuilt, temple worship is reinstated. Ezra is not here.
Chpt 4	Gentile adversaries pressure the Jews. Ezra is not mentioned.
Chpt 5	King Darius, Judah, Haggai, and Zechariah are spoken of. Ezra is not.
Chpt 6	<i>The temple rebuilding is completed.</i> Ezra didn't rebuild the temple. He isn't here.

NINETY YEARS GOES BY!

Chpt 7 *"Now, after these things..."* Ezra shows up. (vs. 1).

What did Ezra do that impressed God so much that He named the book "EZRA?"

I. HE PREPARED HIS HEART (Ezra 7:10)

- a. **Because the heart is desperately wicked** (Jeremiah 17:9)
 - i. Whatever wicked things you do with your eyes, mouth, hands, feet, etc., that wickedness started in your heart.
 - ii. You can't blame environmental factors (upbringing, poverty, outside influences, etc.)
 - iii. We need to read the Bible with the goal of suppressing the wickedness in our heart.
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II. HE PRACTICED WHAT HE PREACHED (Ezra 8:21-23)

- a. **Don't be a hypocrite.**
 - i. If you talk about Jesus, you'd better live like a Christian.
 - ii. If you tell other people to have faith, they should see that YOUR faith is strong.
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III. HE PRAYED (Ezra 9:5-15)

- a. **Don't "SAY a prayer."** The Lord isn't interested in prepared speeches or vain repetitions (Mat. 6:7).
 - b. **Don't use a phony religious voice and language** (thee's, thy's, and thou's).
 - c. **Be sincere, be real, be you.** Pour your heart out to God.
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IV. HE PREACHED (Ezra 10:10-11)

- a. **Don't share your thoughts, opinions, and feelings.** Preach God's word.
 - b. **Preach to move people toward repentance and right actions** (Ezra 10:12).
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