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## The Second Return

### Ezra 7:1-10:44 and Nehemiah 7:73b-11:36

458-457 BC

Fifty-seven years had elapsed between the completion of the Holy Temple in Chapter 6 and Ezra's journey to Jerusalem at the beginning of Chapter 7. Like the First Return, it begins with preparation in Babylon and the introduction of characters. No more is heard about the previous leaders such as Zerubbabel, who is said, according to rabbinic tradition, to have returned to the Persian court.

**Leader:** Ezra

**Decree of:** Artach'shashta (458 BC)

**Company:** 1,754/2,000 men

**Purpose:** Reform the people

**Problem:** Mixed marriages with unbelievers

**Compiled by:** The Chronicler from Ezra and Nehemiah memoirs (to see link click [Ac](#) - Ezra-Nehemiah from a Jewish Perspective: **The Ezra Memoirs**).



**Ezra** was a great student, **he** was a great statesman, **he** was a great reformer, and **he** was a great teacher. But where is **he**? We are more than half way through the book that bears **his** name, and there has been no mention of **him**. There are twenty-five references to **him** from this point onward, half of them in the book of **Nehemiah**. **Chapter 6** ended with the celebration of the rebuilt **Temple**, which was completed under the reign of Darius in 515 BC. With the words, **now after this**, **the Chronicler** covers fifty-seven years of history and introduces **Ezra**. But **the Chronicler's** purpose is not to give us historical information. **He** gives us no information about **Ezra's** life in Babylon, and he offers no reason as to why **Ezra** did not come earlier. **His** focus is on **Ezra**, the teacher of **the Torah**.<sup>124</sup>