

## **Ezra 8: The Journey Home**

**Timeline:** Ezra returns to Jerusalem 56 years after the Temple has been completed (460 BC)

In this chapter, Ezra gives an accounting of the details leading up to his departure from Babylon. What stands out is his chief motivation for making this pilgrimage: the worship and glory of God.

As believers in Christ, it is helpful to consider this chapter, specifically as it pertains to our pilgrimage from Babylon (the world) to the New Jerusalem (heaven).

In fact, there are several New Testament parallels in Ezra 8, especially when you consider Hebrews 11, and the idea of “seeking a city” which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker in God. May we, as partakers of the New Covenant, a royal priesthood, be moved with zeal to worship and an increased desire to reach our final destination: the presence of our Lord.

### **Outline of Chapter 8:**

**:1-14** – The men and their families who returned with Ezra

- genealogy of approximately 1,500 men
- including wives and children, perhaps 6-7,000 people

**:15-20** – The missing Levites

- why were they initially disinclined to go to Jerusalem?
- Meet the Nethinims

**:21-23** – Ezra’s dependence on God for the hazardous journey to Jerusalem

- Ezra’s primary interests:
  1. God’s glory
  2. God’s honor
- Fasting
- Exposure & danger
- God’s answer to prayers

**:24-30** – Stewardship

- Priests: “You are holy to the Lord”
- “Watch and keep” – the importance of vigilance

**:31-36** – The arrival home

- the journey summarized in a single verse
- the reckoning: measuring the treasure in the temple
- offering for sin

**APPLICATION:** focused on 3 sets of questions