

A close-up photograph of an ancient stone wall, likely made of mud-brick or similar material, showing significant wear and a central opening. The wall is composed of irregular, reddish-brown blocks. A white rounded rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "Ezra - Nehemiah" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Ezra - Nehemiah

**While it's essential
that people respond when God leads,
by itself this isn't enough.**

The Backstory – Ezra 1:1

The Babylonian Empire completely destroyed Jerusalem, and exiled survivors to Babylon.

God promised (Jeremiah 29:10) to bring them back after 70 years.

That's where Ezra begins...

God Leads

By opening the way for the work

Ezra 1:2-4

The Persian king decrees the rebuilding of the temple, reversing the Babylonians.

God is sovereign over events and human history.

God Leads

By providing the means for the work

Ezra 1:6-11

Through a “tax,” returning looted items,
and freely given offerings.

*God stirs the hearts of people to fund the
work of ministry. 2 Corinthians 8:9*

People Respond

They Go

Ezra 1:5, 2:1-70

42,000+ people, organized for temple service, make the arduous journey.

There is always a cost to discipleship, and its worth paying in the end. Luke 9:24

People Respond

They Rebuild the Altar

Ezra 3:1-6

Afraid of the land's new inhabitants, they entreat God's protection by resuming the animal sacrifices.

Getting sin dealt with is the first order of business. Hebrews 9:24-26

People Respond

They Celebrate the Foundation, sorta...

Ezra 3:6-13

Great shouts of worshipful joy (10-11) are mixed with great wails of anguish (12-13) from those who saw the original temple.

Though God & the people were involved, the renewal project shows mixed results.