
Church in Campbell Weekly News

September 20, 2026 Issue 26-38

THE NEED OF A RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY

THE RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY THROUGH THE SECRET PRESERVING CARE OF THE HIDING GOD

Following 1 and 2 Chronicles, we have the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. The book of Ezra is concerned with the return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, and the book of Nehemiah is concerned with the repair, the rebuilding, of the city. The book of Esther shows us how the omnipresent and omnipotent God became the hiding God in protecting His captured elect, who were scattered in their captivity.

The first group returned under Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, of the royal family. He was appointed the governor of Judah by Cyrus the king. The second group returned under Ezra, a priest and a scribe. As we have pointed out, this return was made possible through the secret preserving care of the hiding God in their captivity.

God let His people be captured and then scattered in their captivity. He also let the Holy Land be usurped and occupied, and He left the city of Jerusalem to lie waste. Seemingly, the omnipotent and omnipresent God was not doing anything for the people of Israel. Actually, He was protecting and preserving them in a hidden way.

THE HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL BEING A TYPE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS AS GOD'S ELECT

We need to remember that all the history of the people of Israel is a type, typifying the New Testament believers as God's elect. Israel, therefore, is a type of the church. The church was established by the Lord as the Head through His apostles in the first century. Yet by the end of the first century, the church became degraded. This means that the church was captured.

Even among us, individually, whoever is defeated in the spiritual life has been captured. He will remain in captivity until he repents. Through his repentance he will be brought back. If we are captured, we are captured away from the enjoyment of Christ. But our repentance brings us back to Him, back to the enjoyment of Christ.

Today we are in a situation that is typified by the situation at Ezra's time. Some of us have come back already, and others are still on the way.

THE WRITER

The writer of the book of Ezra was Ezra, whose name means "help" or "helper." He was a descendant of Aaron (7:1-5), a priest and a scribe skilled in the law of Moses (vv. 6, 11-12). There are three Ezras in the Bible: one was a priest who returned with Zerubbabel (Neh. 12:1), one was a descendant of Caleb (1 Chron. 4:15-17), and one was the writer of this book.

THE CONTENTS

It is very important for us to know the contents of the book of Ezra. This book gives us a record of the two returns of the children of Israel from their captivity. The first return was under Zerubbabel, a descendant of the royal family of David (chs. 1—6). Zerubbabel should have been the one to succeed the throne of David, but he was appointed to be the governor of Judah by Cyrus. The second return was under Ezra, a priest as the descendant of Aaron (chs. 7—10).

It is significant that Zerubbabel was of the royal tribe (Judah) and that Ezra was a descendant of a priestly family. The priests took care of God's speaking, and the kings took care of God's ruling. All that God has been doing is mainly in these two matters of speaking and ruling.

THE CRUCIAL POINTS

The book of Ezra stresses the return of the children of Israel from their captivity. This return is crucial in four points.

A. The Return of the Children of Israel from Their Captivity Recovering the Purpose of God's Calling of Them

The children of Israel were called by God and separated by God unto Himself as His testimony. Their captivity had annulled this purpose. The return of the children of Israel from their captivity recovered the purpose of God's calling of them.

B. Their Return from Their Captivity to the Unique Ground of Jerusalem Recovering Their Oneness

In order to have one testimony, God always kept the children of Israel together in a narrow piece of land, not allowing them

to become too great in number. They were a particular people in a particular place, and they were in oneness. But the captivity scattered them, some to Assyria, some to Egypt, and most of them to Babylon. This caused them to be divided and thus to lose their oneness as a people for God's testimony. Their return from their captivity to the unique ground of Jerusalem (Deut. 12:5, 11-14) recovered this oneness. However, as we will see, in their return elements of the captivity returned with them.

C. Their Return from Their Captivity Recovering Their Enjoyment of the Portion of the Good Land Promised by God

God brought the children of Israel into His promised good land through His redemption and salvation that they might partake of the good land and enjoy it as their portion in God's economy. Because of their failure, they lost this portion of the good land in their captivity. Their return from their captivity recovered their enjoyment of the portion of the good land promised by God.

Those who are in today's denominations do not stress the enjoyment of Christ, and the denominational people are not taught, instructed, and directed to enjoy Christ. When I was with the denominations, I did not have any enjoyment of Christ. Only after I left the denominations did I begin to enjoy Christ.

Those who are in captivity are away from the good land, away from Christ. The Israelites who were captives in Babylon were away from the good land. Likewise, the Christians in the denominations are kept away by many things from the enjoyment of Christ. They have the name of Christ but not the enjoyment of Christ. If they would have the enjoyment of Christ, they must leave their captivity and come back to the proper ground where Christ, the good land, is.

D. God's Intention to Have His House Built and His Kingdom Established on the Earth

God intended to have His house built and His kingdom established on the earth through Israel's participation in and enjoyment of the good land. There would have been no way to accomplish this unless the children of Israel returned to the good land from their captivity.

Where is God's house and His kingdom today? Satan, the enemy of God, has usurped the earth. He has kept the earth as his house and as his kingdom. This has caused a great problem. Why does God need a people today? God needs a people because He wants a house where He is the Father and a kingdom where He is the King. The Lord needs His house and His kingdom in order to carry out His eternal economy. This is the reason God needs a return of His people from their captivity. God needs a house and a kingdom, and for this He needs the recovery.

All the foregoing crucial points are types typifying today's recovery of the church life, which is a recovery out of the church's captivity in the great Babylon (Rev. 17:1-6) back to the unique ground of God's choice.

THE SECTIONS

The book of Ezra has two sections: the return of the captivity under the kingly leadership of Zerubbabel (chs. 1—6) and the return of the captivity under the priestly leadership of Ezra (chs. 7—10).

(Excerpts from Life- Studies of Ezra Messages 1&2)

Burdens for Church Prayer

- 2026 Targets, # of baptized:22; # of prayer meeting attendance:35; average Lord's Day and small group attendance:10% increase
- Spread the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel on the WVC campus and by Bible distribution in the community.
- Multiply the number of small groups for the increase and building up of the Body of Christ
- Perfect young working saints with shepherding families as containers for the next generation.
- Practice PSRP, BNPB, and vital small groups.
- Blending in the Body, by participating in conferences and trainings
- Establish and strengthen the church services, including children, YP, ushering, etc.
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately
- Pursuing the truth and growth in life to live in the reality of the kingdom.

Announcements

- Life-study of Ezra MSG 1 & 2
- HWMR The Great Need for A New Revival Week 1
- 9/22 (Tue) 7:45pm, Prayer meeting with small groups
- 10/10, 11/7 and 12/12 (Sat.) 10-12pm, South Bay Chinese Speaking saints corporate pursue - Pillars in God's Building), \$50/person (lunch included), Mountain View Meeting Hall (165 E Dana Street, Mountain View, CA 94041); register online, https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfXSCVknIVIN0A_5AVy5NRJz_Gtpu7rx2ml8l9a2Te8eoCohw/viewform
- 10/30-11/1 (Fri to LD) Fall NorCal College Conference at Mission Springs Camps and Conference Center (Scotts Valley, CA)
- 2027 Gospel calendar online order (\$12 each by 10/31): <https://www.livingstream.com/gospel-calendars/zh/gospel-calendars/99999558-2027-gospel-calendar.html>
- 11/26-29 International Thanksgiving Conference at Denver CO
- 12/21-26 December Semiannual Training, register by 11/1
- Financial Giving:
PayPal/Zelle: churchincampbell@gmail.com
Venmo @Churchin-Campbell
- Church in Campbell bookroom account (PayPal/Zelle) churchincampbellbooks@gmail.com