

We know that 1-2 Chronicles and Ezra/Nehemiah comprised two books instead of four in the Hebrew Bible. The first 9 chapters or so of 1 Chronicles is genealogy. Ezra is the account of the rebuilding of the temple while Nehemiah is the account of the rebuilding of the walls of that same city, Jerusalem. Nehemiah arrived (from time markers within the two books) 13 years after Ezra. They were both Levites.

1. The last several verses of 2 Chronicles are repeated in the first several verses of Ezra. This leads me to believe they used to be one book: 1 Chronicles-Nehemiah (with a different name, of course).
2. Vocabulary:
  - a. 1 Chronicles 12:38 show us beginning of David's reign.
  - b. 2 Chronicles 16:9 seems to tell us about the loyal hearts of those now under—not David—but his descendant Asa.
  - c. Ezra 7:10 then speaks of his "heart" has prepared Himself to "seek the law of the Lord."
  - d. Nehemiah 9:8 speaks of Abraham having a "faithful heart." This is another great hint that these were of the same book.<sup>1</sup>

1-2 Chronicles<sup>2</sup> run parallel with 2 Samuel-2 King while Ezra/Nehemiah extend beyond the parallel Chronicles and Kings.

Meanwhile, David's 40 year reign ended about 970 B.C., and the Babylonian captivity around 400 years later. Basically, Nehemiah brings many back from captivity in the mid 400's B.C. so that you know the events of these four books take about 500 years.

We think, then, that the author lived in the 400's, was probably a Levite [qualifying both Ezra (7:1) and Nehemiah (10:8)], and probably in the location of Jerusalem (since the last event in the book of Nehemiah takes place in this location).

**Regarding Ezra:** Ezra has, effectively 124 verses after we subtract 3 verses for a proclamation from Cyrus (1:2-4), 67 verses for a register (2:1-67), 15 verses of correspondence with Artaxerxes (4:9-22), 12 verses of correspondence with Darius (5:6-17), 10 verses of a decree from Darius (6:3-12), 15 verses of a letter from Ezra to Artaxerxes (7:12-26), 14 verses given to a list of Ezra's fellow travelers (8:1-14), and 27 verses of those listed who divorced their pagan wives (10:18-44). This means there is precious little narrative in the book of Ezra: 124 verses of 10 chapters.<sup>3</sup> We pick one Levite, Nehemiah over another Levite, Ezra as the author of this four book set because:

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<sup>1</sup>Just as John the apostle speaks of light, life, and love in all of his own books. By the way, the phrase "hear from Heaven" is used 10 times in the Old Testament: 8 of them are in 2 Chronicles and the other two are in Nehemiah. Also, 54% of the time the word "Levite" is used, it is used in these four books (when you see that another 21% are found in Numbers), this means that 25% of its usage is found in the other 34 books, comprising 87% of the Old Testament. In other words, we should be seeing that the writer of the four books is one author and that this author may have been the last editor of Numbers. Also, somebody that is this preoccupied with "Levites" in his writing is a Levite.

<sup>2</sup>1 Chronicles is primarily about David while 2 Chronicles is primarily about all the kings of Judah after him. The kings of Israel are not dealt with in these books. The main goal of Judges-2 Samuel was to show you the fight between Benjamin (Saul's household) and Judah (David's household). With Benjamin gone from the stage as one of the main players of the 12 tribes, we are left with Judah as the main focus to show us from which tribe the Messiah come.

<sup>3</sup>Nehemiah on the other hand, you take away 2 verses with a letter from Sanballet (6:6-7), 66 verses for a register (which is, by the way, identical with the register in Ezra 2, 7:6-72), 33 verse of a prayer from some Levites

1. Ezra he has ½ the narrative of Nehemiah (see footnote 3), and
2. Uses the first person in 12% of his narrative (which are all found after chapter 7 of Ezra since this is when he is personally involved with the record and these are also less than ½ that of Nehemiah), and
3. Nehemiah “finds” Ezra’s registry (Nehemiah 7:5) thus making him the final “author” (Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7 are almost totally the same), and thus the “writer” of the four books.

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(9:5-38), 27 verses of covenant signers (10:1-27), 12 verses of those living in Jerusalem suburbs (11:25-36), and 21 verses of priests 12:1-21 for a total of 275 verses of narrative. Almost twice that of Ezra.