

**URN
UILD
NSECRATE**



Ezra And The Hand Of God

Ezra 7:1 – 8:14

Elder Tan Chin Tiong

Ezra 7:1-10



After these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, ² the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, ³ the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, ⁴ the son of Zerariah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, ⁵ the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest—

⁶ this Ezra came up from Babylon. *He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given.* The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him. ⁷ Some of the Israelites, including priests, Levites, musicians, gatekeepers and temple servants, also came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. ⁸ Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king. ⁹ He had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, for the gracious hand of his God was on him. ¹⁰ *For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.*

Ezra 7:11-20



King Artaxerxes' Letter to Ezra

¹¹ This is a copy of the letter King Artaxerxes had given to Ezra the priest, a teacher of the Law, a man learned in matters concerning the commands and decrees of the LORD for Israel:

¹² Artaxerxes, king of kings,

To Ezra the priest, teacher of the Law of the God of heaven:

Greetings.

¹³ Now I decree that any of the Israelites in my kingdom, including priests and Levites, who volunteer to go to Jerusalem with you, may go. ¹⁴ You are sent by the king and his seven advisers to inquire about Judah and Jerusalem with regard to the Law of your God, which is in your hand. ¹⁵ Moreover, you are to take with you the silver and gold that the king and his advisers have freely given to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, ¹⁶ together with all the silver and gold you may obtain from the province of Babylon, as well as the freewill offerings of the people and priests for the temple of their God in Jerusalem.

Ezra 7:11-20



¹⁷ With this money be sure to buy bulls, rams and male lambs, together with their grain offerings and drink offerings, and sacrifice them on the altar of the temple of your God in Jerusalem.

¹⁸ You and your fellow Israelites may then do whatever seems best with the rest of the silver and gold, in accordance with the will of your God. ¹⁹ *Deliver to the God of Jerusalem all the articles entrusted to you for worship in the temple of your God.* ²⁰ And anything else needed for the temple of your God that you are responsible to supply, you may provide from the royal treasury.

Ezra 7:21-28



²¹ Now I, King Artaxerxes, decree that all the treasurers of Trans-Euphrates are to provide with diligence whatever Ezra the priest, the teacher of the Law of the God of heaven, may ask of you— ²² up to a hundred talents^[a] of silver, a hundred cors^[b] of wheat, a hundred baths^[c] of wine, a hundred baths^[d] of olive oil, and salt without limit. ²³ Whatever the God of heaven has prescribed, let it be done with diligence for the temple of the God of heaven. Why should his wrath fall on the realm of the king and of his sons? ²⁴ You are also to know that you have no authority to impose taxes, tribute or duty on any of the priests, Levites, musicians, gatekeepers, temple servants or other workers at this house of God.

²⁵ *And you, Ezra, in accordance with the wisdom of your God, which you possess, appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice to all the people of Trans-Euphrates—all who know the laws of your God. And you are to teach any who do not know them.* ²⁶ Whoever does not obey the law of your God and the law of the king must surely be punished by death, banishment, confiscation of property, or imprisonment.^[e]

Ezra 7:21-28



²⁷ Praise be to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, who has put it into the king's heart to bring honor to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem in this way ²⁸ and who has extended his good favor to me before the king and his advisers and all the king's powerful officials. Because the hand of the LORD my God was on me, I took courage and gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.



Ezra and the Hand of God



***"A little with the head
of Maradona
and a little with the
hand of God."***

Book of Ezra



Chapter 1-6

First wave (led by Zerubbabel and Joshua)



Gap of 58 years



Book of Esther



Chapter 7-10 (led by Ezra)

Second wave

Meaning of 'Ezra'



- 'Ezra' comes from the Hebrew word 'azar' meaning *'help'* or *'protect'*.
- The original long form of the name was possibly 'Azaryahu', meaning *'God helps'* or *'God protects'*

Who was Ezra?



Vs 1-5 High Priest

Vs 6 Scribe/Teacher of the Law of Moses

Vs 6 Trustworthy person

Main mission of Ezra



Vs 25,26

Restore justice, Rekindle the flames of devotion among the people of Judah by teaching of the Torah and establishing the religious purity according to Mosaic law

1) God's Hand in the life of a devoted believer



Why was the gracious Hand of God upon Ezra?

Vs 10

For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.

“The Bible is God’s love letter to us, telling us not only that He loves us, but showing us what He has done to demonstrate His love. It also tells us how we should live, because God knows what is best for us and He wants us to experience it.”

Dr Billy Graham

- **Phase 1 Study it**
Read, Study, Meditate, Memorise
- **Phase 2 Live it**
Obey, Apply, Practise
- **Phase 3 Teach it**
Teach, Converse

**don't waste
your life**



john piper

Book of Ezra



“Many study it, few live it and yet fewer will teach it. But to the few that does all three, there is tremendous blessings waiting for him.”

What does the Hand of God symbolises?



Hand of God symbolises;

- His authority and power
- His provision
- His protection
- His guidance
- His favour
- His discipline

Hand of God upon Ezra



- Vs 6** The king had granted him everything he asked, *for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.*
- Vs 28** *Because the hand of the LORD my God was on me,* I took courage and gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.
- Vs 9** He had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, *for the gracious hand of his God was on him.*

Hand of God upon Ezra



Vs 6 The king had granted him everything he asked, *for the hand of the LORD his God was on him.*

Vs 28 *Because the hand of the LORD my God was on me,* I took courage and gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.

Vs 9 He had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, *for the gracious hand of his God was on him.*

He initiated the mission by asking the King.

He challenged and gathered the leaders from Israel to go with him.

He completed the journey without any problems.

2) God's Hand in redemptive intervention



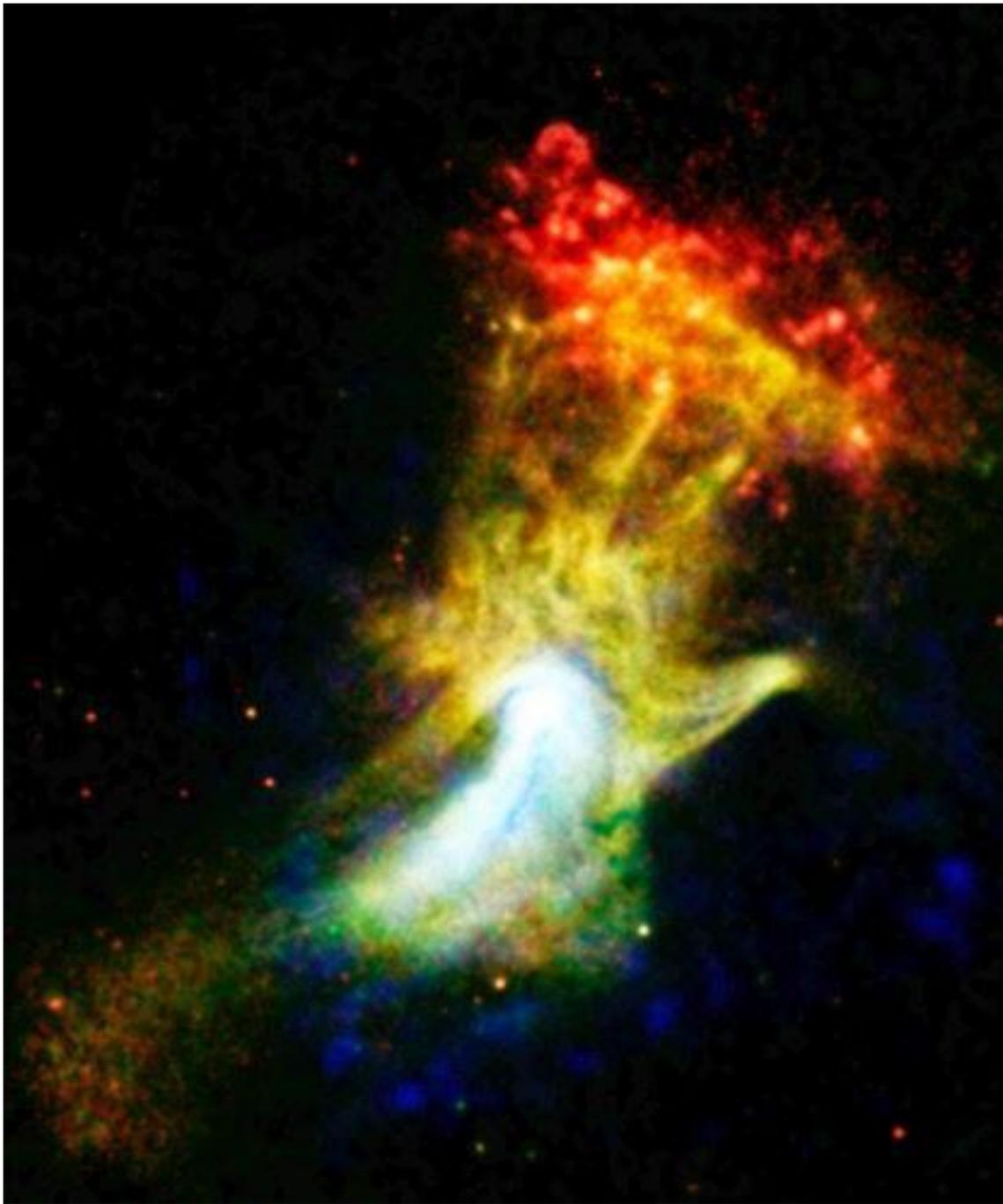
The message of the Bible is that God persistently and continuously gives His grace to people who don't ask for it, don't deserve it, and don't even fully appreciate it after they get it.

Tim Keller

- **430 years** slaves in the land of Egypt
- **40 years** wandering in the desert
- **360 years** ruled by Judges, a dark period
- **400 years** ruled by 42 Kings, of which 35 of them did evil in the sight of God
- **70 years** exile to Babylon
- **80 years** the spiritual house still not in order
- **400 years** Years of silence....

Dan 2:21 “He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others”

Prov 21:1 “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse whenever he pleases



Nicknamed the "**Hand of God**" this object is called a pulsar wind nebula. It's powered by the leftover, dense core of a star that blew up in a supernova explosion.

Image was captured by Nasa Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope

The 2020 State of Theology survey



What do Americans believe about God, salvation, ethics, and the Bible?

It uncovers **widespread confusion** in the United States about the Bible's teaching and the reality of who God is. Many have observed the **drift among Americans toward relativism**, and this survey helps to quantify how this nation is **abandoning objective truth altogether**.

Sadly, just when the church needs to be clear and bold about our triune God, the Scriptures, sin, and salvation, **many evangelicals are evidently being influenced more by this cultural drift than by the Word of God**. Christians have an opportunity to bring light and comfort to our troubled times by pointing to Jesus Christ and the authority and sufficiency of the Bible. These survey results reveal that there is much work to do. Let us pray for an awakening to our holy God and to what He has revealed about Himself and how we are to live in this world."

Chris Larson, President and CEO of Ligonier Ministries

Growing Deeper Initiatives



Join or attend a CG



Study the Bible with ...



Pray with another pe...



Fast for 1 meal a week



Share your life journ...



Memorise Scriptures



Journey with a ment...



Start/continue a fam...



Attend a training co...



Share Christ with 1 n...



Self-designed exercise

Implications for us today



Personal response:

Corporate response: