FIRST EZRA

CHAPTER 1
And Josiah kept the Passover to Lord in Jerusalem; they killed the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month. 2 Having placed the priests according to their divisions, arrayed in their vestments, in the temple of the Lord, 3 he told the Levites, the temple-servants of Israel, that they should sanctify themselves to the Lord when depositing the holy ark of the Lord inside the house that King Solomon son of David, had built, 4 and he said, “It is no longer necessary for you to carry it on your shoulders. Now worship the Lord your God and serve his people Israel; prepare yourselves by your families and tribes, 5 in accordance with the directions of King David of Israel and the magnificence of his son Solomon. And stand in order within the temple according to the divisions of the ancestral-houses of Levites who minister before your brothers, the sons of Israel. 6 And kill the Passover lamb and prepare the sacrifices for your brothers, and keep the Passover according to the commandment of the Lord that was given to Moses.”

7 Josiah provided the following to the people who were present: 30,000 lambs and kids, and 3,000 calves. As he promised, these were contributed from the king’s possessions to the people and the priests and Levites. 8 Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehoiash the king’s sons, contributed for the Passover: 2,600 sheep and 300 calves. 9 And Jeconiah and Shemaiah and his brother Nethanel, and Hashabiah and Ochiel and Joram, captains over thousands, distributed the following to the Levites for the Passover: 5,000 sheep and 700 calves.

10 This is what took place: The priests and the Levites, having the unleavened bread, stood in proper order according to tribes 11 and the divisions of the ancestral-houses, before the people, to make the offering to the Lord as it is written in the book of Moses; this was done in the morning. 12 They roasted the Passover lamb with fire, as required; and they boiled the sacrifices in bronze pots and caldrons, with a pleasing odor, 13 and distributed them to all the people. Afterward they prepared the Passover for themselves and for their brothers the priests, the sons of Aaron, because the priests were offering the fat until nightfall; so the Levites prepared it for themselves and for their brothers the priests, the sons of Aaron. 15 The temple-singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their place according to the arrangement made by David, and also Asaph, Zechariah, and Iddin, who represented the king. 16 The gatekeepers were at each gate; it was not necessary for anyone to leave his post of daily service, for their brothers the Levites prepared the Passover for them.

17 So the things pertaining to the sacrifices of the Lord were accomplished that day: the Passover was kept 18 and the sacrifices were offered on the sacrificial-altar of the Lord, according to the command of King Josiah. 19 And for seven days, the sons of Israel who were present at that time kept the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. 20 No Passover like it had been kept in Israel since the times of the prophet Samuel; 21 nor had any of the kings of Israel kept such a Passover as was kept by Josiah and the priests and Levites and the people of Judah and all of Israel who were living in Jerusalem. 22 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this Passover was kept.

23 And the deeds of Josiah were upright in the sight of the Lord, for his heart was full of compassion toward the people of Israel in accordance with the events of his reign that were chronicled in former times; concerning those who sinned and acted impiously toward the Lord beyond any other people or kingdom, and how they grieved the Lord deeply, so that the accounts of the Lord rose over Israel.

24 After all these acts of Josiah, it happened that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, went to make war at Carchemish on the Euphrates, 25 and Josiah went out against him. 26 And the king of Egypt sent word to him saying, “What have we to do with each other, O king of Judah? 27 I was not sent against you by the Lord God, for my war is at the Euphrates. And now the Lord is with me! The Lord is with me, urging me on! Stand aside, and do not oppose the Lord.”

28 Josiah, however, did not turn back to his chariot, but tried to fight with him, paying no attention to the words of the prophet Jeremiah from the mouth of the Lord, 29 He joined battle with him in the Plain of Megiddo, and the commanders came down against King Josiah. 30 The king said to his servants, “Take me away from the battle, for I am very weak.” And immediately his servants removed him from the line of battle. 31 He got into his second chariot; and while he was returning to Jerusalem he ceased living, and was buried in the tomb of his fathers.

32 And all Judah mourned for Josiah. The prophet Jeremiah composed a lament in honor of Josiah, and the principal men, 33 with the women, have made lamentation for him to this day; this has become an established custom for the whole nation of Israel. 34 These things are written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah; and each one of the acts of Josiah, and his splendor, and his understanding of the law of the Lord, and both his earlier and later achievements, and these that are now told, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

35 The men took Jehoahaz 36 son of Josiah, who was twenty-three years old, and made him king in succession to his father Josiah. 37 He reigned three months in Judah and Jerusalem. Then the king of Egypt deposed him from reigning in Jerusalem and his kingdom, and the king of Babylon took him away to Babylon. 38 He killed the nobles of the land and the priests, and the Levites, who were living in Jerusalem.

39 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign in Judah and Jerusalem; he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. 40 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up against him; he bound him with a chain of bronze and took him away to Babylon. 41 Nebuchadnezzar also took some holy vessels of the Lord, and carried them away, and stored them in his inner-sanctum in Babel. 42 But the things which are reported about Jehoiakim, and his uncleanness and impiety, are written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings.

43 His son Jehoiachin became king in his place. He was eight 44 years old when he was made king, 44 and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. 45 At the turn of the year, Nebuchadnezzar sent messengers and nebuchadnezzar had him brought to Babel, together with the holy vessels of the Lord, 46 and made Jehoiakim king of Judah and Jerusalem.

47 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old, and he reigned eleven years. 48 He also did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and disregarded the words that were spoken by the prophet Jeremiah from the mouth of the Lord. 49 Although he swore an oath to King Nebuchadnezzar in the name of the Lord, he broke his oath and rebelled; and he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart and transgressed the law of the Lord God of Israel, 50 in doing the same evil that the kings of Judah had done before them. 51 And Nebuchadnezzar, who represented the Lord, and all his mighty men of valor, 52 came up against Jerusalem to make war against it, until it became a heap of ruins, and the Lord gave Jerusalem into the hand of the king of Babylon, who 53 removed all its valiant men; and the Lord made Jerusalem into a heap of ruins.

54 The king of Egypt made his brother Jehoiakim king of Judah and Jerusalem. 55 But he too did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and disregarded the words that were spoken by the prophet Jeremiah from the mouth of the Lord.

56 Nebuchadnezzar also took the vessels of gold and silver from the temple of the Lord, which were given to King David his father, and the shields of gold that King Solomon had made, and the vessels of gold and silver that were in the temple of the Lord. 57 And Nebuchadnezzar carried them away to Babylon; 58 and the king dwelt in Jerusalem.

59 So the God of their fathers sent his messengers to recall them, because he wanted to spare both them and his dwelling place. 60 But they mocked his messengers, and whenever the Lord spoke, 61 they scoffed at his prophets. 62 They did this until he, in his anger against his people on account of their depravity, incited the kings of the Chaldeans to go up against them. 63 These killed-off their youths with the long-sword around their holy temple, sparing neither youth nor virgin, neither elder nor newborn, instead he gave everyone into their hands. 64 And they took all the holy vessels of the Lord, great and small, the treasure chests of the temple of the Lord, and the royal stores, and carried them away to Babel. 65 They set fire to the house of the Lord, broke down the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to its towers, 66 and utterly destroyed 67 all its glorious things. The survivors he led away to Babylon. 68 In the long-sword and they became slaves to him and to his sons until the Persians began to reign, in fulfillment of the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, 69 saying, “Until the land has enjoyed its sabbaths, it shall keep sabbath all the time of its desolation until the completion of seventy years.”

CHAPTER 2
In the first year of the reign of Cyrus of the Persians, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, 2 the Lord stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of the Persians, and he made a proclamation throughout his entire kingdom, 10 and which he also put in writing:

3 This is what King Cyrus of the Persians says:

The Lord of Israel, the Lord Most High, has made me king of the inhabited earth, 4 and I am persuaded that he is the god whom the Israelite nation worships, for he foretold my name through the prophets; and he has commanded me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in the land of Judah. 5 Therefore, if any of you are of his people, may your Lord be with you; go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord of Israel—he is the Lord who dwells in Jerusalem. 6 This house of the Lord shall be of greater glory than the old, 7 and his people shall live by the courts of his sanctuary. 8 All that live in the house of Judah, the priests and the Levites, indeed, everyone whose spirit has been stirred by the Lord, to go up to build the house in Jerusalem for the Lord.

Therefore, if any of you are of his people, may your Lord be with you; go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord of Israel—he is the Lord who dwells in Jerusalem. 6 This house of the Lord shall be of greater glory than the old, 7 and his people shall live by the courts of his sanctuary. 8 All that live in the house of Judah, the priests and the Levites, indeed, everyone whose spirit has been stirred by the Lord, to go up to build the house in Jerusalem for the Lord.

Then the family chiefs of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin arose, along with the priests and the Levites, indeed, everyone whose spirit had been stirred by the Lord, to go up to Jerusalem and build the house for the Lord of Israel. 9 Their neighbors helped them with everything, with silver and gold, with horses and livestock, and with other things set aside as vows for the temple of the Lord that is in Jerusalem.

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10 King Cyrus also brought out the holy vessels of the Lord that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had stored in the shrine of his god. 11 When King Cyrus of the Persians brougth these out, he gave them to Mithredath, his treasurer, and to him and by them were given to Sheshbazzar, the governor of Judah. 12 The number of these vessels was: 1000 gold dishes, 1000 silver dishes, 29 silver censers, 30 gold bowls, 2410 silver bowls, and 1000 other vessels. 13 The sum of all the gold and silver vessels returned was 5469. 14 And they were carried back by Sheshbazzar with the returning exiles from Babel, being unwilling to leave their possessions. 15 Their neighbors helped them with everything, with silver and gold, with horses and livestock, and with other things set aside as vows for the temple of the Lord that is in Jerusalem.

16 In the time of King Artaxerxes1 of the Persians, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, the recorder Rehum, the scribe Shimshai, and the rest of their associates, living in Samaria and other places, wrote him the following letter, against those who were living in Judah and Jerusalem:

17 To King Artaxersxes our lord, your servants the recorder Rehum, and the scribe Shimshai, and the rest of their council, and the judges in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem.

18 Let it now be known to our lord2 that the Judeans who came up from you to us have arrived at Jerusalem3 and have begun to build that rebellious and wicked city, to repair both its marketplaces and walls and laying the foundations for an inner-sanctum. 19 Now if this city is built and the walls finished,23 they will not only refuse to pay tribute but will even withstand kings and seek rather to rule than to obey. 20 And since the construction of the inner-sanctum has already begun, we think it best not to overlook such a matter. 21 But to call it to the attention of our lord the king, in order that, if it seems good to you, a search may be made in the records of your fathers. 22 And you will find in the annals2 what has been written about them, and will learn that this city was rebellious, troubling both kings and cities, and 23 that the Judeans were rebellious and inciters of sieges in former times. 24 That is why this city was laid waste until now. 25 Now therefore, we make known to you, O lord and king,31 that if this city is built and its walls raised up, you will no longer have access to Coelesyria and Phoiniké.

25 Then the king, in reply to the recorder Rehum,2 the scribe Shimshai, and the rest of their associates living in Samaria and Syria and Phoiniké, wrote as follows:33

26 I have read the letter that you sent me. So I ordered search to be made into the records of my fathers, and it was indeed discovered that this city has resisted kings in former times,27 that the humans within it were given to rebellion and war, and that mighty and cruel kings ruled in Jerusalem and exacted tribute from Coelesyria and Phoiniké. 28 Therefore I have now issued orders to prevent these humans27 from building the city, and to see to it beforehand,38 that nothing further be done 29 and that such wicked proceedings go no further to the annoyance of kings.

30 Then, when the letter from King Artaxersxes was read, Rehum and the scribe Shimshai and their associates went quickly to Jerusalem, with cavalry and a large number of armed troops, and began to obstruct the builders. And the building of the city39 and the temple in Jerusalem was discontinued until the second year of the reign of King Darius of the Persians.

CHAPTER 3
Now in the first year of his reign,4 King Darius held a great banquet for all his subjects, for all who were born in his house, and all the nobles of Media and the satraps of Persia, 2 and all the satraps and generals and governors that were under him in the hundred twenty-seven satraps from Hudo to Cush. 3 And they ate and drank; and when they were satisfied they went away to their own horses to sleep,2 and King Darius went to his bedroom; he fell asleep, but woke up again.

4 Then he said to the three young bodyguards, who kept guard over the person of the king,4 “Let each of you5 state what one thing he thinks is strongest; and to the one whose statement seems wisest, King Darius will give magnificent gifts and great honors of victory. 6 He shall be clothed in purple, and drink from gold cups, and sleep on a gold bed, and have a chariot with gold bridles, and a turban of fine linen, and a necklace around his neck; 7 and because of his wisdom he shall sit next to Darius and shall be called Kinsman of Darius.”

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Then each wrote his own maxim, and sealed it and put it under King Darius’ pillow. 9 And they said, “When the king wakes, they will give him the writing; and the one whose maxim the king and the three nobles of Persia judge to be wisest, will be given the prize of victory for what is written.”

10 The first wrote, “The wine is strongest.”

11 Emendation based on Josephus' paraphrase / Text "us"
12 Josephus “Isarel, Yahweh God of the heavens” / Josephus “The Most High God”
13 Josephus “from building the city, and to see to it beforehand”
14 Josephus “by the governors and satraps who were in the neighborhood of their country”
15 Josephus “us”
16 Josephus "and enemies of kings"
17 Josephus “omit [many & all]”
18 Josephus “and with many presents besides all the”
19 Josephus “wine is strongest.”
20 Josephus "we have thought it proper to write you, O king, and not to overlook these things” / Ezra4:14(LXX) omit altogether
21 Josephus “in his”
22 Josephus “and enemies of kings”
23 Josephus “omit ‘O lord and king’”
24 Josephus “ omit ‘and to see to it beforehand’”
25 Josephus “omit ‘Syrria’”
26 Josephus “always resisted kings”
27 Josephus “that its inhabitants”
28 Josephus “prevent the Judeans”
29 Josephus “omit ‘and to see to it beforehand’”
30 Josephus “omit ‘and we will give him the writing’”
31 Josephus “omit ‘Prize of victory’”
32 Josephus “Prize of victory”
33 Josephus “Prize of victory”
34 Josephus “Prize of victory”
The second wrote, "The king is strongest."

The third wrote, "The women are strongest, but the truth is victorious above all things."

When the king awoke, they took the writing and gave it to him, and he read it. Then he sent and summoned all the nobles of Persia and Media and satraps and generals and toparchs and consuls, and he took his seat in the judgment hall, and the writing was read in their presence. He said, "Call the youths, and they shall explain their maxims." So they were summoned. And when they came in, 17 they said to them, "Explain to us what you have written."

Then the first, who had spoken of the strength of the wine, began and said, 18 "Men, how incomparably strong is the wine! It confuses the minds of all humans who drink it. 19 It reduces to the same level the mind of the king and the orphan or the untutored, of the slave and the free, of the poor and the rich. 20 It turns every thought into forgetting, into feasting and mirth, and makes one forget all sorrow and debt. 21 It makes all hearts feel rich, makes one forget kings and satraps, and makes everyone talk in millions of talents. 22 When men drink they forget to be friendly with friends and brothers, and before long they draw their sabers. 23 And whenever they may recover from the wine, they arise and have not remembered what they did during their drunkenness. 24 Men, is not the wine incomparably strong, since it forces men to act in this manner?" Once he had said this, he stopped speaking.

CHAPTER 4

Then the second, who had spoken of the strength of the king, began to speak, 2 "Men, are not humans incomparably strong, who rule over land and sea and all that is in them? 3 But the king is incomparably stronger; he is their lord and master, and whatever he decrees to them they obey. 4 If he tells them to make war upon one another, they do it. And if he sends them out against the enemy, they go, and scale mountains, and pull down walls, and towers. 5 They kill and are killed, and never transgress the king’s command. If they win the victory, they bring everything to the king—both what they plunder, as well as everything else. 6 Likewise, there are those who neither serve in the army, nor make war, but cultivate the soil and plow; 7 whenever they sow and reap, they bring some to the king; and they compel one another to pay taxes to the king. 8 And yet he is only one man! If he tells them to kill, they kill; if he tells them to desist, they desist; 9 if he tells them to strike, they strike; if he tells them to lay waste, they lay waste; if he tells them to build, they build; 10 if he tells them to cut down, they cut down; if he tells them to plant, they plant. 11 All his subjects and his armies obey him without delay. 12 Furthermore, he reclaims, he eats and drinks and sleeps; 13 but they stand guard around him, and no one may go away or withdraw to attend to his own affairs, nor do they disobey him. 14 Men, why is the king not incomparably strong, since he is to be obeyed in this fashion?" And he stopped speaking.

13 Then the third, who had spoken of 13 women and truth (he was Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel from the tribe of Judah), began to speak, 14 "Men, is not the great king, and are not humans many, and is not the wine strong? But who is their master? Who dominates them? Is it not the women? 15 The women have given birth to the king and to every people that rules over sea and land. 16 From them they came; 17 and these women brought up the very men who plant the vineyards which produce the wine. In short, there is nothing which we do not get from them. 18 And these women make the gowns of the humans, and they bring glory to the humans; and humans cannot exist without the women. 19 Indeed, if men gather gold and silver or any other elegant thing, and then see a woman beautiful and of renown, 20 they let all those things go, and give after her, and with open mouths stare at her countenance, 21 all preferring her beauty to gold or silver or any other elegant thing. 22 A human leaves his own father and mother, 23 who brought him up, and his own country, and clings to his own woman. 24 And he resigns his soul with his woman, with no thought of his father or his mother or his country and often become for the sake of our best friends, and we have the courage to lose our lives by their side. 25 Therefore you must remember that the human is not you.

"Do you not labor and toil, and bring everything and give it to the women? 26 And a human takes his long-sword, and proceeds to wage war, and rob and steal, and to sail the sea and rivers; 27 he faces lions, and he walks through darkness, and when he steals and robs and steals-clothes, he brings it back to the woman he passionately desires. 28 And a human loves his woman more than his father or his mother. 29 Many men have lost their minds due to the women, and have become slaves because of them. 30 Many have perished, or stumbled, or sinned due to the women. 31 Now, then, will you not believe me? "Is not the king great in his power? Do not all lands fear to touch him? 32 Yet I have seen him with Apame, the king’s concubine, the daughter of the illustrious Bartacus; 33 she would sit at the king’s right hand 30 and take the crown from the king’s head and put it on her own, and slap the king with her left hand. 31 At this the king would gaze at her with mouth agape. If she smiles at him, he laughs; 32 if this anger temper with him, he flatters her, so that she may be reconciled to him. 33 Men, how incomparably strong are the women, since they can act like this? 34 Then the king and the nobles looked at one another; and he proceeded to speak about truth, 35 "Men, are not the women strong? Great is the earth, high are the heavens, and swift is the sun in its course when it races around its circuit of the heavens and returns again to its place in one day. 36 Is not the one who does these things strong? But truth is great, and incomparably stronger than all things. 37 The whole earth appeals to truth, and the heavens bless it. And all God’s works quake and tremble, and with him there is nothing unrighteous. 38 The wine is unrighteous. The king is unrighteous. All the sons of the humans are unrighteous, and all their works are unrighteous, and all the things such as these. And there is no truth in them and in their unrighteousness they will perish. 39 But truth endures and is strong forever, and lives and prevails forever and ever. 39 With it, there is neither partiality nor preference, but it does what is rightest instead of anything that is unrighteous or wicked. Everyone approves its deeds, 40 and there is nothing unrighteous in its judgment. 41 To it belongs the strength and the kingship and the power and the majesty of all the ages. Blessed be the God of the truth!" 42 When he stopped speaking, all the people shouted and said, "Great is truth, and incomparably strong!"

2 Then the king said to him, "Ask what you desire, even beyond what is written, and we will give it to you, for you have been found to be the wisest. You shall sit next to me, and be called my Kinsman." 43 Then he said to the king, "Remember the vow which you vowed on the day when he became king, to build Jerusalem, and to send back all the vessels that were taken from Jerusalem, which Cyrus set apart 17 when he vowed to
destroy Babel, and vowed to send them back there. And you also vowed to build the inner-sanctum, which the Edomites and Samarians and those of Coelesvria burned when Judah was laid waste by the Chaldeans. And now, O Lord the king, this is what I ask and request of you, and this befits your greatness. Therefore, I beseech that you fulfill the vow whose fulfillment you vowed to the King of the heavens with your own lips.

47 Then King Darius arose and kindled him, and wrote letters for him to all the treasurers and governors and generals and satraps, ordering them to grant safe conduct to him and to all who were going up with him to build Jerusalem. And he wrote and letters to all the governors in Coelesvria and Phoinike and to those in Lebanon, to cut down and transport cedar timber from Lebanon to Jerusalem, and to assist him in building the city. He wrote in behalf of all the Judeans who were going up from his kingdom to Judah, in the interest of their freedom, that no officer or satrap or governor or treasurer should force his way into their homes; that the Edomites and Samarians and Coelesvrians should give up the villages which they had taken over from the Judeans; that twenty talents a year should be given for the building of the temple until it was completed, and that an additional ten talents a year should be given for daily hilariasts to be offered on the sacrificial-altar, in accordance with the commandment to make seventeen offerings; and that freedom should be given to everyone who came up from Babel to build the city, to them and to their children, as well as to the priests who came. He wrote also concerning their support and the priests’ vestments in which they were to minister to God. He decreed that the expenses for the Levites should be provided and that land and wages should be allocated for all the city guards. And he sent back from Babel all the vessels of wood and stone which they had taken over from the spoils of Babel, and vowed to send back there.

58 When the youth departed, he lifted up his face toward the heavens in the direction of Jerusalem, and blest the King of the heavens, saying: “From you comes the victory; from you comes wisdom, and yours is the glory.” I am your slave.

60 Blessed are you, who have given me wisdom; I give you thanks, O Lord of our fathers.”

61 So he took the letters, and went to Babel, where he informed all of his brothers. And they blest the God of their fathers, because he had given them the victory; and to assist him in building the city.

CHAPTER 5

After this, the chief-captains of the ancestral-houses, according to their tribes, were chosen to return, along with their women and sons and daughters, and their boys and servant-girls, and their livestock. And Darius sent with them 1,000 cavalry to take them back to Jerusalem in safety, with the music of drums and flutes. All their brothers were playing instruments. And he ordered them to go up with them. These are the names of the men who went up, according to their ancestral-houses in the tribes, over their groups: 5 the priests, the sons of Phinehas, the sons of Aaron were; the sons of Joiada, son of Jozadak, son of Seraiah; and Joakim, son of Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, of the house of David, of the lineage of Perez, of the tribes in the country of Judah, each to his own town. They came with the permission of the king, to build the city, to them and to their children, as well as to the priests who came. He wrote also concerning their support and the priests’ vestments in which they were to minister to God. He decreed that the expenses for the Levites should be provided and they were chosen to return, along with their women and sons and their children, as well as to the priests who came. He wrote also concerning their support and the priests’ vestments in which they were to minister to God. He decreed that the expenses for the Levites should be provided and to be sent to Jerusalem.

And they returned with the king, to build the temple of the God of their fathers, because he had given them counsel and victory and wisdom and glory. And he wrote that land and wages should be provided and that twenty talents a year should be given for the building of the temple until it was completed, and that an additional ten talents a year should be given for daily hilariasts to be offered on the sacrificial-altar, in accordance with the commandment to make seventeen offerings; and that freedom should be given to everyone who came up from Babel to build the city, to them and to their children, as well as to the priests who came. He wrote also concerning their support and the priests’ vestments in which they were to minister to God. He decreed that the expenses for the Levites should be provided and to be sent to Jerusalem.

23 The sons of Jericho.
24 The sons of another Elam.
25 The sons of Magbish.
26 The men of Nebo.
27 The Chadiasans and Ammidians.
28 The men of Anathoth.
29 The sons of Baitar.
30 The sons of Bezai.
31 The sons of Anniah.
32 The sons of Azzur.
33 The sons of Keilan and Azetas.
34 The sons of Ater, namely of Hezekiah.
35 The sons of Adonikam.
36 The sons of Azzaz.
37 The sons of Bether.
38 The sons of Neziah.
39 The sons of Hisrlorihth.
40 The sons of Batai.
41 The sons of Bethelhehm.
42 The men of Netophah.
43 The men of Anathoth.
44 The men of Beth-azmaveth.
45 The men of Kiriat-jeirim.
46 The men of Chephirah and Beeroth.
47 The Chadiasans and Ammidians.
48 The men of Ramah and Geba.
49 The men of Michmas.
50 The men of Bethel [and Ai].
51 The men of Beeroth.
52 The sons of Magbish.
53 The sons of another Elam.
54 The sons of Netophah.
55 The sons of another Elam.
56 The men of Beth-azmaveth.
57 The men of Kiriat-jeirim.
58 The men of Chephirah and Beeroth.
59 The Chadiasans and Ammidians.
60 The men of Ramah and Geba.
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62 The men of Bethel [and Ai].
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65 The sons of another Elam.
66 The men of Netophah.
67 The sons of another Elam.
68 The men of another Elam.
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70 The men of Ramah and Geba.
71 The men of Michmas.
72 The men of Bethel [and Ai].
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74 The sons of another Elam.
75 The sons of another Elam.
76 The men of another Elam.
77 The Chadiasans and Ammidians.
78 The men of Ramah and Geba.
79 The men of Michmas.
80 The men of Bethel [and Ai].
81 The men of Beeroth.
82 The sons of another Elam.
83 The sons of another Elam.
24 The priests:
The sons of Jediah, of the house of Jeshua, of the sons of Sanasib
972
The sons of Immer
1052
25 The sons of Pashhur
1247
The sons of Harim
1017

26 The Levites:
The sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel and Binnui and Hodiavah
74

27 The temple-singers:
The sons of Asaph
128

28 The gatekeepers:
The sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai the doorkeepers—400; the men of Ishamel, the sons of Lakoubatos—1,000; the sons of Tobiah—139 in all.

29 The temple-servants:
The sons of Esau,4 the sons of Hasupha,5 the sons of Tabbaoth, the sons of Keros, the sons of Siha, the sons of Padon, the sons of Lebanon, the sons of Hagabah,6 the sons of Akkub, the sons of Uthai, the sons of Ketab,7 the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shamlai, the sons of Hanan, the sons of Koua,8 the sons of Gahar,9 the sons of Jairus, the sons of Dezin,1 the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Chezib, the sons of Gazerah, the sons of Pherez, the sons of Phinees, the sons of Hashar,10 the sons of Besai, the sons of Asnah, the sons of Munnim, the sons of Nephusim, the sons of Balkuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,11 the sons of Pharakim,12 the sons of Bazzluth,13 the sons of Mehidra, the sons of Koutha, the sons of Harea,14 the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, the sons of Neizah, the sons of Hatipha.

33 The sons of Solomon’s servants:
[The sons of Sota],20 the sons of Hassophebeth, the sons of Peruda, the sons of Jaalah, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Shephathiah,34 the sons of Hagia, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Sarothie, the sons of Mesiah, the sons of Gas, the sons of Addus, the sons of Subas, the sons of Aphsira, the sons of Barodis, the sons of Shaphat, the sons of Alton.

35 All the temple-servants and the sons of Solomon’s servants were 372.22

36 The following are those who returned from Tel-melah and Tel-harsa, under the leaders: Cheruthalanan, and Aller;37 but they were unable to trace their ancestral-houses or lineage in Israel: the sons of Delaiah son of Tobijah, and the sons of Nekoda—652.23

38 Of the priests, the following had assumed the priesthood, but whose registration could not be found: the sons of Habbaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, and the sons of Jaddua who had married Agia, one of the daughters of Barzillai, and was called by his name. 39 When a search was made in the register and the genealogy of these men was not found, they were excluded from serving as priests. 40 And Nehemiah and the governor told them not to share in the holy things until a chief-priest should arise wearing Urim and Thummim—525.28

41 All those of Israel, twelve or more years of age, besides boys and servant-girls, were 42,360;29 42 their boys and servant-girls were 7,337;30 there were 245,31 musicians and singers. 43 There were 435 camels and, 7,036 horses, 245 mules, and 5,525 donkeys.

44 When some of the leaders of the ancestral-houses came to the temple of God that is in Jerusalem, they vowed that, to the best of their ability, they would erect the house on its former site, 45 and that they would contribute the following to the sacred treasury for the work: 1,000 minas of gold, 5,000 minas of silver, and 100 priests’ vestments.

46 The priests, and the Levites, and some of the people settled in Jerusalem and its vicinity; and the temple-singers, the gatekeepers, and all Israel settled in their towns.

47 When the seventh month came, and the Israelites were all in their own homes, they assembled as one man in the plaza before the first gate facing the east. 48 Then Jeshua son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, with his brothers, took their places and prepared the sacrificial-altar of the God of Israel, 49 to offer holocausts upon it, as prescribed in the book of Moses the human of God. 50 And some of the peoples of the land united with them in erecting the sacrificial-altar in its site; even though they were at enmity with them, all the peoples of the land supported them.

And they offered sacrifices at the proper times and holocausts to the Lord, morning and evening. 51 They kept the Festival of Booths, as it is commanded in the law, and offered the proper sacrifices every day, 52 and thereafter the regular offerings, and sacrifices on sabbaths and at new moons and at all the consecrated festivals. 53 And as many as had vowed any vow to God began to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings to the Lord as they had vowed. 54 In the time of Darius the Persian, the Jews, and the people of Jerusalem, and all who had been brought back from the captivity, rejoiced and made sacrifices at the proper times and holy feasts.

55 The building continued, and other work was begun, and Darius was told that the temple was being built.

56 In the second month, during the second year of Darius after their fourth arrival at the temple of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua son of Jozadak, together with their kindred and the levitical priests and all who had come back to Jerusalem from exile, 57 began to lay the foundation of the inner-sanctum of God on the new moon of the second month in the second year after their arrival in Judah and Jerusalem. 58 They appointed the Levites who were twenty or more years of age to have charge of the work of the Lord. And Jeshua arose, together with his sons and brothers, and his brother Kadmiel, and the sons of Jeshua Emadiaban, and the sons of Judah son of Eliiadan, with his sons and brothers, to conquer all the Levites, pressing forward the work on the house of God with a single purpose.

So the builders built the inner-sanctum of the Lord. 59 And the priests stood arrayed in their vestments, with musical instruments and trumpets, in conjunction with the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, 60 hymning to the Lord and blessing him, according to the directions of King David of Israel; 61 and they sang hymns, confessing the Lord, “Because his goodness and his glory are in his temple.” 62 And all the people sounded trumpets and raised a mighty shout, singing to the Lord for the erection of the house of the Lord. 63 Some of the priests (that is the Levites), and the presidents of the ancestral-houses, the elderly men who had seen the former house, came to the building of

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21 [5:40] Elimelech, Ezra(MT), Neh / LXX(B), Ezra(LXX) “and the Araritians”
22 [5:40] Josephus / LXX, Ezra omit “525”
23 [5:40] Josephus, about twelve thousand
24 [5:41] LXX, Ezra, Neh(MT), LXX(A)/ Josephus “4,628,000” (error) / Neh(LXX) “420,000”
25 [5:41] Josephus also add a detail about there being “a mixed number of women and children amounting to 46,742”
26 [5:42] Neh(LXX)“only” “7334”
27 [5:42] LXX, Neh, Josephus / Ezra “200”
28 [5:43] most LXX / LXX(N), Ezra(N), Neh(MT) “736” / Neh(LXX) omit this number
29 [5:43] LXX, Josephus, Ezra(N), Neh(MT) “6720” / Neh(LXX) “7200”
30 [5:45] LXX / Josephus “100” / Ezra “6100” / Neh “10000” “20000” “20000”
32 [5:45] LXX / Ezra / Neh(LXX) “530” “67” / Neh(LXX) “30” + “67”
33 [5:45] most LXX, Josephus, Ezra / Ezra “first”
34 [5:45] Josephus “month. And also they began to build the (TEMPLE).”
35 [5:45] Ezra(LXX), Ezra(MT), LXX(A) “curm” / Josephus “joy”
36 [5:45] Josephus omit “and the Tositres”
37 [5:45] Josephus “Lebanon, bind the logs together and fasten them into rafts to convey them to”
38 [5:45] Josephus add
39 [5:46] omit, L/C, add
40 [5:46] LXX(N), Ezra(MT) / LXX(B) “his”
41 [5:46] LXX(N), Ezra, Neh / LXX(B) “Damuel” / Josephus “Zadmiel”
44 [5:50] most LXX, Ezra / others “Lord”
45 [5:51] Ezra(MT) “and many”
this one with weeping and great lamentation, 64 while many came with trumpets and a joyful noise, 65 so that the people were unable to hear the trumpets because of the noise of the people; for the multitude sounded the trumpets so loudly, that the sound was heard from afar.

66 And when the enemies of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin heard it, they came to find out what the sound of the trumpets meant. 67 And they learned that the returned exiles were building the inner sanctum for the Lord God of Israel.

68 So they came to Jerubbabel and Zerubbabel and the leaders of the ancestral houses and said to them, “Let us build with you. 69 For we obey your Lord just as you do and we have sacrificed to him since the days of King Esarhaddon1 of the Assyrians, who brought us here from Cuthia and Media.”

70 But Zerubbabel and Joshua and the leaders of the ancestral houses in Israel said to them, “You may not share in building the house for the Lord our God, 71 for we alone will build it for the Lord of Israel, just as Cyrus, and now Darius,1 the king of the Persians, commanded us.”

72 But the peoples of the land pressed hard upon those in Judah, cut off their supplies, and hindered their building; 73 and by schemes and demagoguery and uprisings they prevented the completion of the building as long as King Cyrus lived. They were kept from building for two years, until the reign of Darius.

CHAPTER 6

Now in the second year of the reign of Darius, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo prophesied to the Judeans who were in Judah and Jerusalem; they prophesied to them in the name of the Lord God of Israel. 2 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jozadak began to build the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, with the help of the prophets of the Lord who were with them.

3 At the same time, Tattenai the governor of Syria and Phoeniké, and Shethar-bozenai, and their associates came to them and said, 4 “By whose order are you building this house and laying the foundations of this structure? And who are the builders that are finishing these things?” 5 Yet the Judean elders were dealt with kindly, for the providence of the Lord was over the captives; 6 they were not prevented from building up till the time that Darius was informed about them and a report made.

7 A copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of Syria and Phoeniké, and Shethar-bozenai, and their associates the local leaders in Syria and Phoeniké, wrote and sent to Darius:

8 To King Darius, greetings.

Let it be fully known to our lord the king that, when we went to the country of Judah and entered the city of Jerusalem, we found the Judean elders, who had been in exile, 9 building in the city of Jerusalem a great new house for the Lord, of hewn stone, with rafters being laid on the walls. 10 These operations are going on rapidly, and the work is prospering in their hands and being completed with all splendor and diligence. 11 Then we asked these elders, ‘At whose command are you building this house and laying the foundations of this structure?’ 12 In order that we might inform you in writing who the humans, the ones leading them, are, we questioned them and asked them for a list of the names of those who are at their head.

13 They answered us, ‘We are the servants of the Lord1 who created the heavens and the earth. 14 The house was built and finished many years ago by a great and strong king of Israel. 15 But when our fathers sinned against the Lord of Israel who is in the heavens, and provoked him, he gave them over into the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babel,1 king of the Chaldeans; 16 and they demolished the house, and burned it, and carried the people away captive to Babel. 17 But in the first year that Cyrus reigned over the country of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree that this house should be rebuilt. 18 And the holy vessels of gold and of silver, which Nebuchadnezzar had removed from the house in Jerusalem and stored in his own inner-sanctum, these King Cyrus took out again from the inner-sanctum in Babelia, and they were delivered to Zerubbabel1 and Sheshbazzar the governor2 to whom he gave orders to take back all these vessels and put them in the inner-sanctum at Jerusalem, and that this inner-sanctum of the Lord should be rebuilt on its site. 20 So when Sheshbazzar arrived here, he laid the foundations of the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem. Although it has been under construction from that time until now, it has not yet reached completion.’

21 Now therefore, O king, if it seems wise to do so, let search be made in the royal archives of our lord1 the king that are in Babel; 22 and if it is found that the house of the Lord in Jerusalem was constructed with the consent of King Cyrus, and if it is approved by our lord the king, let him send us directions concerning these things.

23 Then Darius commanded that search be made in the royal archives that were deposited in Babel. And in Hathamatha (also known as Ecbatana), the castle that is in the country of Media, a scroll11 was found in which the following was recorded:

24 In the first year of the reign of King Cyrus, he ordered that the Lord’s1 house in Jerusalem be built, where they sacrifice with perpetual fire; 25 its height to be sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits, with three layers of hewn stone and one layer of new native timber;11 and similarly an altar on which they may sacrifice to God;15 and the cost is to be paid from the treasury of King Cyrus;16 also that the holy vessels of the house of the Lord, both of gold and of silver, which Nebuchadnezzar removed from the house in Jerusalem and carried away to Babel, should be restored to the house in Jerusalem, to be placed where they were originally.

27 So Darius commanded Tattenai the governor of Syria and Phoeniké, and Shethar-bozenai, and their associates, and those who were appointed as local leaders in Syria and Phoeniké, to keep away from the place, and to permit Zerubbabel, who was the servant of the Lord and governor of Judah, and the Judean elders to build this house of the Lord on its site.

28 And I further decree that it be fully built, and that full effort be made to assist those who have returned upon the exile of Judah, until the house of the Lord is finished. 29 and that a regular quota of the taxes levied in Coelesyria and Phoeniké be scrupulously given to these humans for sacrifices to the Lord, that is, to Zerubbabel the governor, for bulls and rams and lambs and kids,17 and likewise wheat and salt and wine and oil, regularly every year, without quibbling, for daily use as the priests in Jerusalem may indicate, 31 in order that libations may be made to the Most High God in behalf of the king and his boys,18 and that prayers be offered for their lives.

32 He decreed that if anyone should transgress or nullify any of the things herein written,20 that a beam should be torn out of the house of the perpetrator, who then should be impaled upon it,21 and all his property be confiscated for the king.22

33 “Therefore, may the Lord, whose name is there called upon, eliminate every king and nation that stretches out their hands to hinder or damage that house of the Lord in Jerusalem. 34 If King Darius, have decreed that it be done with all diligence as here prescribed.”23

CHAPTER 7

Then Tattenai the governor of Coelesyria and Phoeniké, and Shethar-bozenai, and their associates, following the orders of King Darius, 2 supervised the holy work with very great care, assisting the Judean elders and the temple-officers.2 And the holy work prospered, while the prophets Haggai and Zechariah prophesied; 4 and they completed it in accordance with the command of the Lord God of Israel: So with the consent of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes,2 kings of the Persians, 5 the holy house was finished by the twenty-third2 day of the month of Adar, in the sixth2 year of King Darius. 6 And the people of Israel, the priests, the Levites, the rest of those who returned from exile who joined them, carried out the prescriptions stated in the book of Moses. 7 For at the dedication of the temple of the Lord, they offered 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, 8 and twelve he-goats for the sin of all Israel, corresponding to the number of the twelve tribal-chiefs of Israel.19

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3 [5:69] Josephus add
4 [5:70] Josephus add
5 [6:9] LXX(A,N), Ezra / LXX(B) “laid in the houses”
8 [6:18] LXX, Josephus / Ezra omit Zerubbabel here
9 [6:18] LXX / Josephus “and the treasurer” / Ezra omit altogether
10 [6:23] others “of Cyrus”
13 [6:25] LXX(B) “of stone” / LXX(A) “of mighty stones”
14 [6:25] LXX(B) “one course of timer” / some “one course of new timer”
17 [6:29] Ezra / Josephus add
20 [6:32] others “stated above” or “added in writing”
21 [6:32] Josephus , “that he should be seized and crucified”
22 [6:32] Josephus “and his house shall become mine.” / Ezra “and let his house be made a dunghill”
23 [7:34] LXX, Ezra / Josephus replaces entire verse 34 with “Upon finding these things in the archives of Cyrus, Darius wrote an answer to Tattenai and his associates, which read as follows: ‘King Darius to the exarch Tattenai and Shethar-bozenai and their associates, greeting, I have sent you a copy of the letter which I found in the archives of Cyrus, and it is my will that everything should be done as is stated therein.”
24 [7:27] Josephus “officers of the senate”
25 [7:34] LXX / Josephus “and Artaxerxes”
26 [7:35] LXX, Ezra / Josephus “the third” (in error)
27 [7:5] LXX, Ezra / Josephus “ninth” / other Josephus “eleventh”
28 [7:8] LXX, Josephus / Ezra “twelve tribes”
and silver that may be found in the country of Babellā, together with what is given by the nation for the temple of their Lord which is in Jerusalem, both gold and silver, bulls and rams and lambs with their accessories, so that sacrifices may be offered on the sacrificial-altar of their Lord that is in Jerusalem. Whatever you and your brothers may desire to do with the gold and silver, perform it in accordance with the will of your God, and as soon as you deliver the holy vessels of God that are given you for the use of the temple of your Lord that is in Jerusalem. And whatever else you may find necessary for the temple of your God, you must provide out of the royal treasury.

And indeed, I, King Artaxerxes, have commanded the treasurers of Syria and Phoinikē to give him, without hesitation, whatever Ezra the priest and reader of the law of the Most High God sends for, up to a hundred talents of silver, and likewise up to a hundred cords of wheat, a hundred baths of wine, and salt in abundance.

Let everything prescribed in the law of God be scrupulously fulfilled for the Most High God, so that wrath may not fall upon the kingdom of the king and his sons. You are also advised that no tribute or any other tax is to be laid on any of the priests or Levites or temple-singers or gatekeepers or temple-servants or persons employed in this temple, nor anyone who has authority to impose any tax upon them.

And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of God, appoint judges and magistrates to render decisions for all those who know the law of your God, throughout all Syria and Phoinikē; and you shall instruct those who do not know it. All who transgress the law of your God or the law of the king he may suffer punishment not as an ignorant transgressor but as one who, in spite of knowing it, boldly disobeys and shows contempt. Such men shall be strictly punished, whether by death or some other punishment, be it fine or imprisonment.

25 Then Ezra the scribe said, “Blessed is the Lord alone, who has put these things into the heart of the king, to glorify his house which is in Jerusalem, and who honored me in the sight of the king and his counselors and all his advisers, friends and nobles.

26 I was encouraged by the help of the Lord my God, and I assembled men from Jerusalem to go up with me. These are the fore-leaders, according to their ancestral-houses and their divisions, who went up with me from Babel, in the reign of King Artaxerxes:

27 Of the sons of Phinehas: Gershom.

28 Of the sons of Ithamar: Gamael.

29 Of the sons of David: Hattush son of Shecaniah.

30 Of the sons of Parosh: Zerachiah, and with him 150 men enrolled.

31 Of the sons of Pahath-moab: Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah, and with him 200 men.

32 Of the sons of Zattu: Shecaniah son of Johaiah, and with him 300 men.

33 Of the sons of Adin: Obad son of Jonathan, and with him 250 men.

34 Of the sons of Elam: Jeshaijah son of Gotholiath, and with him 70 men.

35 Of the sons of Shephatiah: Zerahiah son of Michael, and with him 70 men.

[8:1] LXX / Josephus “of the Babellān” / Ezra “of Babel”

[8:2] LXX / Josephus “And you shall dedicate” / Ezra(MT,LXX) “And deliver”

[8:3] LXX, Ezra(MT,LXX) / Josephus “omit for the use of…” / Ezra(MT,LXX) “in Jerusalem”

[8:4] LXX, Ezra(MT,LXX) / Josephus “omit for King Artaxerxes”

[8:5] LXX / Ezra(MT) “of God” / Josephus omit altogether

[8:6] LXX, Ezra(MT,LXX) / Josephus omit altogether

[8:7] LXX, Ezra(MT,LXX) / Josephus “of the Lord your God” / Josephus omit altogether

[8:8] LXX, Ezra(MT,LXX) / Josephus “in Jerusalem”

[8:9] LXX, Ezra(MT) / Josephus “in the days of the king” / Josephus “of the king”

[8:10] Josephus add

[8:11] Josephus “punished either with death or with the payment of a fine.”

[8:12] LXX, Ezra(MT,LXX) / Josephus omit altogether

[8:13] LXX(LXX) / Josephus “Then Ezra the scribe said”

[8:14] LXX, Ezra / LXX(LXX) “rulers”

[8:15] LXX add

[8:16] LXX / Josephus “Then he read the letter to the Judges who were in Babel. And while he kept the letter itself, he sent a copy of it to his countrymen who were in Media. When they learned of the king’s orders and of his properity toward God, as well as his goodwill toward Ezra, they were all greatly pleased.”

[8:17] LXX, Ezra / LXX(LXX) “Photius”

[8:18] LXX, Ezra(LXX) / Josephus “Tatianosmos”

[8:19] LXX, Ezra / LXX(LXX) “Daniel” / some LXX “Gammaliel”

[8:20] LXX, Ezra / LXX(LXX) “Hattush the Shecaniah” / most LXX omit altogether

[8:21] LXX / Josephus “Maath-moab”

[8:22] LXX(LXX) / Josephus “Eleonias”


[8:24] LXX(LXX) / Josephus “Babellā”

[8:25] Ezra “30”

[8:26] Ezra “Athaliah”

1. [7:15] LXX, Ezra / Josephus “of the Persian King”

2. [7:20] Josephus add the following here: “But the Samaritans, who regarded them with feelings of hostility and envy, inflicted many injuries on the Judeans, for they relied on their wealth and pretended to be related to the Persians, since they had come from their country. And the sums which they had been ordered by the king to pay the Judeans out of their tribute for the sacrifices, they refused to furnish, and they had the harshest zealously aiding them in this; and whatever else they could do to injure the Judeans either by themselves or through others, they did not hesitate to try. Therefore, the people of Jerusalem resolved to send an embassy to King Darius to accuse the Samaritans; the envoys were Zerubbabel and four other leaders. When the king learned from these envoys the complaints and charges which they brought against the Samaritans, he gave them a letter and sent them off to bring it to the ears of Syria and the council. It was written as follows: ‘King Darius to Tagamas and Sanballat, the eparchs of the Samaritans, and Sadrakes and Huedon and the rest of their fellow-servants in Samaria. Zerubbabel, Hananiah and Mordecai, the envoys of the Judeans, have charged you with helping them in building the [TEMPLE] and with failing to provide with the sums which I commanded you to pay them for the expenses of the sacrifices. Therefore, it is my will that, when you have read this letter, you shall furnish them out of the royal treasury, from the tribute of Samaria, everything which they may need for the sacrifices as the priests request; in order that they may not lose off their daily sacrifices or their prayers to God on behalf of me and the Persians…” These were the contents of the letter.”
41 I assembled them at the river called Thera, and we encamped there three days, where I inspected them. 42 When I found none of the sons of the priests or of the Levites there, 43 I sent word to Eliezar, Iuel, 44 Elathan, Shemaiah, 45 Jarib, Nathan, Elathan, 46 Zechariah, and Meshullam and Joiarib and Elaiah, 47 who were the leaders and learned men; 45 and I told them to go to Idid, 48 who was the chief of the place of the treasurers, 49 and ordered them to tell Idid and his brothers and treasurers at that place to send us men capable of serving in the priests' office in the house of our Lord. 47 And by the mighty hand of our Lord they brought us competent men of the sons of Mahli son of Levi, son of Israel, namely Sherebiah 48 with his sons and brothers—18 men; 49 also Hashabiah and Hanan and his brother Jeshaijah, 50 of the sons of Hananiah, and their sons—20 men; 49 and of the temple-servants, whom David and the leaders had appointed for the service of the Levites—220 temple-servants; the list of all their names was on record.

50 There I vowed a fast for the youths before our Lord, to seek from him a prosperous journey for ourselves and for our children and the livestock. 51 For I was ashamed to ask the king for foot soldiers and cavalry as an escort to keep us safe from our adversaries; 52 for we had said to the king, “The power of our Lord is with those who seek him, and will support them in every way.” 53 So we again beseeched our Lord about these things, and we found him very merciful.

54 Then the word of our Lord, but he was angry with the priests, saying, “You have transgressed your commandments, which you issued through your servants the prophets, saying, 55 ‘The land that you are entering to take possession of is a polluted land, polluted by its aliens who have filled it with their uncleanness. 56 And now give your daughters in marriage to their sons, and do not take their daughters for your sons: 57 you must never seek to have peaceful relations with them, so that you may be strong, and eat the good things of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your sons forever.’

56 And all that has happened to us has come about because of our evil deeds and our great sins. For you, O Lord, lifted the burden of our sins 57 and gave us such a root as this; but we turned back again to transgress your law by mixing with the uncleanness of the nations of the land. 58 Were you not angry enough with us to destroy us without leaving a root or seed or name? 59 O Lord of Israel, you are faithful; for we are left as a root to this day. 60 Behold, we are now before you in our iniquities; yet we can no longer stand in your presence because of these things.

61 And Ezra arose and made the high priest, the Levites, and the priests to appoint those of them whose names were on record.

62 Leaving the Thera River 63 on the twelfth day of the first month of the seventh year of the reign of (Artaxerxes), we arrived in Jerusalem because of the mighty hand of our Lord, which was upon us; he protected us from every enemy on the way, and so we came to Jerusalem on the fifth month of the same year. 64 When we had been there three days, the silver and the gold were weighed out and given to them in the house of our Lord. 65 And those who had returned from exile offered sacrifices to the Lord God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel, sixty-six rams, 66 seventy-two 67 lambs, and as a thank-offering eighteen male goats—all as a sacrifice to the Lord. 67 They delivered the king’s orders 10 to the royal stewards and to the governors of Coelesyria and Phoeniké; and these officials honored the people and the temple of the Lord.

68 After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “Our Lord, 69 The people of Israel, and the rulers, and the priests, and the Levites have not kept themselves apart from the aliens of the land and their uncleannesses, from the Hittites, the Egyptians, the Arabians, the Chaldeans, 70 For they and their sons have married the daughters of these people, so that the holy race has been mixed with the alien peoples of the land; and from the beginning of this affair, even the fore-leaders and the great men have been sharing in this lawlessness.”

71 As soon as I heard these things, I tore my robes and my holy mantle, and pulled out from my heart and beard, and sat down in anxiety and grief. 72 And those who were moved by the word of the Lord of Israel gathered around me, as I mourned over this iniquity, and I sat grief-stricken until the evening sacrifice.

73 Then I rose from my fast, still in my torn robes and my holy mantle; and kneeling down and stretching out my hands to the Lord, 74 I said: “O Lord, I am mortified, confused before your face. 75 For our sins have risen higher than our heads, and our mistakes have mounted up to the heavens, 76 from the times of our fathers, and we are in great sin to this day. 77 And because of our sins and the sins of our fathers, we, together with our brothers and our kings and our priests, were given over to the kings of the earth, to the long-sword and exile and plundering, in shame until this day. 78 And now in some measure mercy has come to us from you, O Lord, 79 to leave us a root and a name in your holy place, 80 and to uncover a light for us in the house of the Lord our God, and to give us food in the time of our slavery. 80 Even in our enslavement we were not forsaken by our Lord, but he brought us into favor with the Persians kings, so that they gave us food 81 and glorified the temple of our Lord, and raised Zion from desolation, to give us a strong hold 82 in Judah and Jerusalem.

82 “And now, O Lord, having these things, what more can we ask? For we have transgressed your commandments, which you issued through your servants the prophets, saying, 83 ‘The land that you are entering to take possession of is a polluted land, polluted by its aliens who have filled it with their uncleannesses. 84 If and when you give your daughters in marriage to their sons, and do not give your sons in marriage to their daughters, 85 you must never seek to have peaceful relations with them, so that you may be strong, and eat the good things of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your sons forever.’

86 And that all has happened to us has come about because of our evil deeds and our great sins. For you, O Lord, lifted the burden of our sins 87 and gave us such a root as this; but we turned back again to transgress your law by mixing with the uncleanness of the nations of the land. 88 Were you not angry enough with us to destroy us without leaving a root or seed or name? 89 O Lord of Israel, you are faithful; for we are left as a root to this day. 90 Behold, we are now before you in our iniquities; yet we can no longer stand in your presence because of these things.

91 While Ezra was praying and making his confession, weeping and lying on the ground before the temple, there gathered around him a very great crowd of magnificent men and youths from Jerusalem; for there was greatweeping among the multitude.

92 Then Shecaniahan, one of the sons of Israel, called out, and said to Ezra, “We have sinned against the Lord, and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land; but even now there is hope for Israel. 93 Let us swear an oath to the Lord about this, that we will put away all our foreign wives, 94 and all those who have returned from exile offered sacrifices to the Lord God of Israel,
CHAPTER 9

Then Ezra arose and went from the court of the temple to the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, and spent the night there; and he did not eat bread or drink water, because he was mourning over the great iniquities of the multitude. So a proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all who had returned from exile that they should assemble at Jerusalem, 4 and anyone who failed to meet there within two or three days, in accordance with the decision of the presiding elders, their livestock would be seized for sacrifice and the men themselves expelled from the multitude of those who had returned from the captivity.

5 Then the men of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within three days; this was on the twentieth day of the ninth month. 6 And the entire multitude sat down in the plaza before the temple and the elders were also present, shivering because of the bad weather that prevailed. 7 Then Ezra arose and said to them, “You have broken the law by marrying foreign women, and so have increased the sin of Israel. 8 Now then make confession and give glory to the Lord God of our fathers, and do his will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from your foreign wives.”

10 Then all the multitude shouted and cried with a loud voice, “We will do as you have said. 11 But the multitude is great and it is winter, and we are not able to stand in the open air. This is not a work we can do in one day or two, for we have sinned too greatly in these things. 12 But let the fore-leaders of the multitude, and let all those in our settlements who have foreign wives come at the designated time, 13 along with the elders and judges of each place, until the wrath of the Lord turns away from us on account of this matter.”

14 Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah approved of this matter, and Meshullam and the Levite Shabbethai served with them as judges. 15 And those who had returned from exile acted in accordance with all this.

16 Then those who had returned for himself the leading men of their ancestral houses, all of them by name; and on the new moon of the tenth month they met together in closed session to investigate the matter. 17 And the cases of the men who had foreign wives lasted until the new moon of the first month.

18 Of the priests, those who were brought in and discovered to have foreign wives were:

19 Of the sons of Jeshua son of Zodakad and his brothers: Maaseiah, Elielzar, Jarib, and Jodan.

20 Of the sons of Elam: Uzzi, Zabdi, and Jerryah.

21 Of the sons of Jedaiah: Childers.

22 Of the sons of Nethaneel: Mattathah.

23 Of the Levites: Jozabad and Shimei and Kelaiah, who was Kelita, and Pethahiah and Judah and Eliezer.

24 Of the temple-singers: Eliashib and Zakkur.

25 Of the gatekeepers: Shallum and Telem.

26 Of Israel:

27 Of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Izhar, Malchijah, Milelos, and Eleazar, and Asaphiah.

28 Of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah and Zechariah, Jehiel and Abdi, and Jeremoth and Eliajah.

29 Of the sons of Zattu: Eliashib, Othoniah, Jeremiah, and Zabad and Zerahliah.

29 Of the sons of Bheul: Jehohanan and Hananiah and Zaddiq and Emath.

30 Of the sons of Bani: Ullam, Malluch, Adariah, Jashub, and Yissaphiah and Jeremoth.

31 Of the sons of Addi: Lathos and Moishah, Lukkam and Naidu, and Bescapasmos and Zathel, and Belnus and Manasseh.

32 Of the sons of Hanani: Eliodah and Asiah and Melchiah and Babylon and Shimeon and Cameas.

33 Of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai and Mattattah and Zabad and Eliphelet and Jeremai and Manasseh and Shimei.

34 Of the sons of Bani: Jeremai, Maadi, Amram, Joel, Mamdia and Pedieah and Anos and Karabaseon and Enasebo and Mantanaimoth, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Mattenai, Binnui, Edalel, Shimein, Shelemiah, Nathaniah.

35 Of the sons of Ezra: Shashai, Azarel, Azaleah, Sheemah, Shemariah, Shalem, Amariah, Joseph.

36 Of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Iddi, Joel, Benafia.

37 All these had married foreign women, and they dismissed them together with their children.

38 The priests and the Levites and the Israelites settled in Jerusalem and in the country. On the new moon of the seventh month, when the sons of Israel were in their settlements, the whole multitude gathered with one accord in the plaza before the east gate of the temple. 39 They requested Ezra the high priest and reader to bring out the law of Moses that had been given by the Lord God of Israel. 40 So, on the new moon of the seventh month, Ezra the chief-priest brought the law, for the entire multitude to hear, from man to woman, and to all the priests.

41 And he read aloud in the plaza before the temple gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of both men and women; and all the multitude gave attention to the law. 42 Ezra the priest and reader of the law stood on the wooden platform that had been prepared; 43 and beside him on his right stood Mattathiah, Shema, Ananiah, Azariah, Uriah, Hezechiah, and Baalsammas; and 44 on his left stood Pedaiath, Meshael, Malchijah, Lothasabus, Nabariah, and Zechariah.

45 Then, in the sight of the multitude, Ezra took up the book of the law in his hands;
for he was seated in the place of honor in the presence of all. 46 When he opened the law, everyone stood erect. And Ezra\(^1\) blest the Lord God Most High, the God of hosts,\(^2\) the Almighty.

47 And the multitude answered, “Let it be, let it be.” They lifted up their hands, and fell to the ground and worshiped the Lord.

48 Jeshua and Annia\(^3\) and Sherebiah, Jamin,\(^4\) Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah,\(^5\) Maani\(^6\) and Kelita, Azariah and Jozabad,\(^7\) Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, taught the law of the Lord and read the law of the Lord to the multitude,\(^8\) at the same time explaining what was read.

49 Then the governor\(^9\) said to Ezra the chief-priest and reader, and to the Levites who were teaching the multitude, with regard to all, 50 “This day is holy to the Lord” — now they were all weeping as they heard the law — 51 “so go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet,\(^10\) and send portions to those who have none; 52 for the day is holy to the Lord; and do not be sorrowful, for the Lord will exalt you.”

53 The Levites commanded all the people, saying, “This day is holy; do not be sorrowful.”

54 Then they all went their way, to eat and drink and enjoy themselves, and to give portions to those who had none, and to make great rejoicing; 55 because they were inspired by the words in which they had been taught. And they assembled.

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\(^1\) [9:46] LXX(A), Neh8:6 / LXX(B) “Azariah”
\(^2\) [9:46] LXX(Bb,A) / LXX(B) “the Most High God”
\(^3\) [9:48] most LXX / some late LXX, Neh8:7 “Hani”
\(^4\) [9:48] LXX(Bb), Neh / other LXX “Jadin”
\(^5\) [9:48] LXX(B) “Aatias”
\(^6\) [9:48] LXX / Neh8:7 “Maaseiah”
\(^7\) [9:48] LXX(Bb), A / LXX(B) “Kattethzabdos”
\(^8\) [9:48] others add
\(^10\) [9:51] LXX(A), Neh8:10 / most LXX omit “and drink the sweet”