

## Ezra

In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in order that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom, and also in a written edict declared: "Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of those among you who are of his people--may their God be with them! --are now permitted to go up to Jerusalem in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel--he is the God who is in Jerusalem; and let all survivors, in whatever place they reside, be assisted by the people of their place with silver and gold, with goods and with animals, besides freewill offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem." The heads of the families of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites--everyone whose spirit God had stirred--got ready to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. All their neighbors aided them with silver vessels, with gold, with goods, with animals, and with valuable gifts, besides all that was freely offered. King Cyrus himself brought out the vessels of the house of the LORD that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods. King Cyrus of Persia had them released into the charge of Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar

the prince of Judah. And this was the inventory: gold basins, thirty; silver basins, one thousand; knives, twenty-nine; gold bowls, thirty; other silver bowls, four hundred ten; other vessels, one thousand; the total of the gold and silver vessels was five thousand four hundred. All these Sheshbazzar

5 brought up, when the exiles were brought up from Babylonia to Jerusalem.

Now these were the people of the province who came from those captive exiles whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried captive to Babylonia; they returned to Jerusalem and Judah, all to their own towns.

They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai,

10 Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah. The number of the Israelite people: the descendants of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy-two. Of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy-two. Of Arah, seven hundred seventy-five. Of Pahath-moab, namely the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred twelve. Of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. Of

15 Zattu, nine hundred forty-five. Of Zaccai, seven hundred sixty. Of Bani, six hundred forty-two. Of Bebai, six hundred twenty-three. Of Azgad, one thousand two hundred twenty-two. Of Adonikam, six hundred sixty-six. Of Bigvai, two thousand fifty-six. Of Adin, four hundred fifty-four. Of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, ninety-eight. Of Bezai, three hundred twenty-three. Of

20 Jorah, one hundred twelve. Of Hashum, two hundred twenty-three. Of Gibbar,

ninety-five. Of Bethlehem, one hundred twenty-three. The people of Netophah,  
 fifty-six. Of Anathoth, one hundred twenty-eight. The descendants of  
 Azmaveth, forty-two. Of Kiriatharim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred  
 forty-three. Of Ramah and Geba, six hundred twenty-one. The people of  
 5 Michmas, one hundred twenty-two. Of Bethel and Ai, two hundred twenty-  
 three. The descendants of Nebo, fifty-two. Of Magbish, one hundred fifty-six.  
 Of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. Of Harim, three  
 hundred twenty. Of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty-five. Of  
 Jericho, three hundred forty-five. Of Senaah, three thousand six hundred  
 10 thirty. The priests: the descendants of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine  
 hundred seventy-three. Of Immer, one thousand fifty-two. Of Pashhur, one  
 thousand two hundred forty-seven. Of Harim, one thousand seventeen. The  
 Levites: the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the descendants of  
 Hodaviah, seventy-four. The singers: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred  
 15 twenty-eight. The descendants of the gatekeepers: of Shallum, of Ater, of  
 Talmon, of Akkub, of Hatita, and of Shobai, in all one hundred thirty-nine.  
 The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, Keros,  
 Siaha, Padon, Lebanah, Hagabah, Akkub, Hagab, Shamlai, Hanan, Giddel,  
 Gahar, Reaiah, Rezin, Nekoda, Gazzam, Uzza, Paseah, Besai, Asnah, Meunim,  
 20 Nephisim, Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur, Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha, Barkos, Sisera,

Temah, Neziah, and Hatipha. The descendants of Solomon's servants: Sotai,  
Hassophereth, Peruda, Jaalah, Darkon, Giddel, Shephatiah, Hattil, Pochereth-  
hazzebaim, and Ami. All the temple servants and the descendants of  
Solomon's servants were three hundred ninety-two. The following were those  
5 who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, though  
they could not prove their families or their descent, whether they belonged to  
Israel: the descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda, six hundred fifty-two.  
Also, of the descendants of the priests: the descendants of Habaiah, Hakkoz,  
and Barzillai (who had married one of the daughters of Barzillai the  
10 Gileadite, and was called by their name). These looked for their entries in  
the genealogical records, but they were not found there, and so they were  
excluded from the priesthood as unclean; the governor told them that they  
were not to partake of the most holy food, until there should be a priest to  
consult Urim and Thummim. The whole assembly together was forty-two  
15 thousand three hundred sixty, besides their male and female servants, of  
whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven; and they had  
two hundred male and female singers. They had seven hundred thirty-six  
horses, two hundred forty-five mules, four hundred thirty-five camels, and six  
thousand seven hundred twenty donkeys. As soon as they came to the house  
20 of the LORD in Jerusalem, some of the heads of families made freewill

offerings for the house of God, to erect it on its site. According to their resources they gave to the building fund sixty-one thousand darics of gold, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly robes. The priests, the Levites, and some of the people lived in Jerusalem and its vicinity; and

5 the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants lived in their towns, and all Israel in their towns. When the seventh month came, and the Israelites were in the towns, the people gathered together in Jerusalem. Then Jeshua son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel with his kin set out to build the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt

10 offerings on it, as prescribed in the law of Moses the man of God. They set up the altar on its foundation, because they were in dread of the neighboring peoples, and they offered burnt offerings upon it to the LORD, morning and evening. And they kept the festival of booths, as prescribed, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number according to the ordinance, as required for

15 each day, and after that the regular burnt offerings, the offerings at the new moon and at all the sacred festivals of the LORD, and the offerings of everyone who made a freewill offering to the LORD. From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid. So they gave

20 money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the

Sidonians and the Tyrians to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the grant that they had from King Cyrus of Persia. In the second year after their arrival at the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak made a  
5 beginning, together with the rest of their people, the priests and the Levites and all who had come to Jerusalem from the captivity. They appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to have the oversight of the work on the house of the LORD. And Jeshua with his sons and his kin, and Kadmiel and his sons, Binnui and Hodaviah along with the sons of Henadad,  
10 the Levites, their sons and kin, together took charge of the workers in the house of God. When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments were stationed to praise the LORD with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, according to the directions of King David of Israel; and they sang responsively, praising and  
15 giving thanks to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel." And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads of families, old people who had seen the first house on its foundations, wept with a loud  
20 voice when they saw this house, though many shouted aloud for joy, so that

the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted so loudly that the sound was heard far away. When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the LORD, the God of Israel, they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of King Esar-haddon of Assyria who brought us here." But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of families in Israel said to them, "You shall have no part with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus of Persia has commanded us." Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build, and they bribed officials to frustrate their plan throughout the reign of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia. In the reign of Ahasuerus, in his accession year, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam and Mithredath and Tabeel and the rest of their associates wrote to King Artaxerxes of Persia; the letter was written in Aramaic and translated. Rehum the royal deputy and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows (then Rehum the royal deputy, Shimshai the

scribe, and the rest of their associates, the judges, the envoys, the officials,  
the Persians, the people of Erech, the Babylonians, the people of Susa, that  
is, the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble  
Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the  
5 province Beyond the River wrote--and now this is a copy of the letter that  
they sent): "To King Artaxerxes: Your servants, the people of the province  
Beyond the River, send greeting. And now may it be known to the king that  
the Jews who came up from you to us have gone to Jerusalem. They are  
rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city; they are finishing the walls and  
10 repairing the foundations. Now may it be known to the king that, if this city  
is rebuilt and the walls finished, they will not pay tribute, custom, or toll,  
and the royal revenue will be reduced. Now because we share the salt of the  
palace and it is not fitting for us to witness the king's dishonor, therefore we  
send and inform the king, so that a search may be made in the annals of  
15 your ancestors. You will discover in the annals that this is a rebellious city,  
hurtful to kings and provinces, and that sedition was stirred up in it from  
long ago. On that account this city was laid waste. We make known to the  
king that, if this city is rebuilt and its walls finished, you will then have no  
possession in the province Beyond the River." The king sent an answer: "To  
20 Rehum the royal deputy and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their



associates who live in Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River, greeting. And now the letter that you sent to us has been read in translation before me. So I made a decree, and someone searched and discovered that this city has risen against kings from long ago, and that

5 rebellion and sedition have been made in it. Jerusalem has had mighty kings who ruled over the whole province Beyond the River, to whom tribute, custom, and toll were paid. Therefore issue an order that these people be made to cease, and that this city not be rebuilt, until I make a decree.

Moreover, take care not to be slack in this matter; why should damage grow

10 to the hurt of the king?" Then when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum and the scribe Shimshai and their associates, they hurried to the Jews in Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease. At that time the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.

15 Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak set out to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God, helping them. At the same time Tattenai the governor of

20 the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came

to them and spoke to them thus, "Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?" They also asked them this, "What are the names of the men who are building this building?" But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report

5 reached Darius and then answer was returned by letter in reply to it. The copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his associates the envoys who were in the province Beyond the River sent to King Darius; they sent him a report, in which was written as follows: "To Darius the king, all peace! May it be

10 known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God. It is being built of hewn stone, and timber is laid in the walls; this work is being done diligently and prospers in their hands. Then we spoke to those elders and asked them, 'Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?' We also asked them their names, for

15 your information, so that we might write down the names of the men at their head. This was their reply to us: 'We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. But because our

ancestors had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of

20 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house

and carried away the people to Babylonia. However, King Cyrus of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt. Moreover, the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem and had brought

5 into the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. He said to him, "Take these vessels; go and put them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site."

Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in

10 Jerusalem; and from that time until now it has been under construction, and it is not yet finished.' And now, if it seems good to the king, have a search made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by King Cyrus for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. Let the king send us his pleasure in this matter." Then King Darius made a

15 decree, and they searched the archives where the documents were stored in Babylon. But it was in Ecbatana, the capital in the province of Media, that a scroll was found on which this was written: "A record. In the first year of his reign, King Cyrus issued a decree: Concerning the house of God at

Jerusalem, let the house be rebuilt, the place where sacrifices are offered and

20 burnt offerings are brought; its height shall be sixty cubits and its width

sixty cubits, with three courses of hewn stones and one course of timber; let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. Moreover, let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and brought back to the temple in Jerusalem, each to its place; you shall put them in the house of God." "Now you, Tattenai, governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and you, their associates, the envoys in the province Beyond the River, keep away; let the work on this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site. Moreover I make a decree regarding what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God: the cost is to be paid to these people, in full and without delay, from the royal revenue, the tribute of the province Beyond the River. Whatever is needed--young bulls, rams, or sheep for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests in Jerusalem require--let that be given to them day by day without fail, so that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his children. Furthermore I decree that if anyone alters this edict, a beam shall be pulled out of the house of the perpetrator, who then shall be impaled on it. The house shall be made a dunghill. May the God who has established his name there

overthrow any king or people that shall put forth a hand to alter this, or to  
destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, make a decree; let it be  
done with all diligence." Then, according to the word sent by King Darius,  
Tattenai, the governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and  
5 their associates did with all diligence what King Darius had ordered. So the  
elders of the Jews built and prospered, through the prophesying of the  
prophet Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo. They finished their building by  
command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus, Darius, and King  
Artaxerxes of Persia; and this house was finished on the third day of the  
10 month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. The people of  
Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles,  
celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. They offered at the  
dedication of this house of God one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four  
hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats,  
15 according to the number of the tribes of Israel. Then they set the priests in  
their divisions and the Levites in their courses for the service of God at  
Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses. On the fourteenth day of  
the first month the returned exiles kept the passover. For both the priests and  
the Levites had purified themselves; all of them were clean. So they killed  
20 the passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for

themselves. It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from  
exile, and also by all who had joined them and separated themselves from  
the pollutions of the nations of the land to worship the LORD, the God of  
Israel. With joy they celebrated the festival of unleavened bread seven days;  
5 for the LORD had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king  
of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work on the house of God,  
the God of Israel. After this, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra  
son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, son of Shallum, son of  
Zadok, son of Ahitub, son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth, son  
10 of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, son of Abishua, son of Phinehas,  
son of Eleazar, son of the chief priest Aaron-- this Ezra went up from  
Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that the LORD the  
God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all that he asked, for the  
hand of the LORD his God was upon him. Some of the people of Israel,  
15 and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the  
temple servants also went up to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of King  
Artaxerxes. They came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the  
seventh year of the king. On the first day of the first month the journey up  
from Babylon was begun, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to  
20 Jerusalem, for the gracious hand of his God was upon him. For Ezra had set

his heart to study the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel. This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to the priest Ezra, the scribe, a scholar of the text of the commandments of the LORD and his statutes for Israel: "Artaxerxes, king of

5 kings, to the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven: Peace.

And now I decree that any of the people of Israel or their priests or Levites in my kingdom who freely offers to go to Jerusalem may go with you. For you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to make inquiries about Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God, which is in your

10 hand, and also to convey the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, with all the silver and gold that you shall find in the whole province of Babylonia, and with the freewill offerings of the people and the priests, given willingly for the house of their God in Jerusalem. With this money, then,

15 you shall with all diligence buy bulls, rams, and lambs, and their grain offerings and their drink offerings, and you shall offer them on the altar of the house of your God in Jerusalem. Whatever seems good to you and your colleagues to do with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do, according to the will of your God. The vessels that have been given you for the

20 service of the house of your God, you shall deliver before the God of

Jerusalem. And whatever else is required for the house of your God, which you are responsible for providing, you may provide out of the king's treasury.

"I, King Artaxerxes, decree to all the treasurers in the province Beyond the River: Whatever the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven,

5 requires of you, let it be done with all diligence, up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred cors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and unlimited salt. Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven, or wrath will come upon the realm of the king and his heirs. We also notify

10 you that it shall not be lawful to impose tribute, custom, or toll on any of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, or other servants of this house of God. "And you, Ezra, according to the God-given wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River who know the laws of your

15 God; and you shall teach those who do not know them. All who will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be strictly executed on them, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of their goods or for imprisonment." Blessed be the LORD, the God of our ancestors, who put such a thing as this into the heart of the king to glorify

20 the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, and who extended to me steadfast love



before the king and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty officers.

I took courage, for the hand of the LORD my God was upon me, and I gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me. These are their family heads, and this is the genealogy of those who went up with me from Babylonia, in

5 the reign of King Artaxerxes: Of the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom. Of Ithamar, Daniel. Of David, Hattush, of the descendants of Shecaniah. Of Parosh, Zechariah, with whom were registered one hundred fifty males. Of the descendants of Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males. Of the descendants of Zattu, Shecaniah son of Jahaziel,

10 and with him three hundred males. Of the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males. Of the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiiah son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males. Of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him eighty males. Of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred eighteen males. Of

15 the descendants of Bani, Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him one hundred sixty males. Of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males. Of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him one hundred ten males. Of the descendants of Adonikam, those who came later, their names being Eliphelet, Jeuel, and

20 Shemaiah, and with them sixty males. Of the descendants of Bigvai, Uthai

and Zaccur, and with them seventy males. I gathered them by the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped three days. As I reviewed the people and the priests, I found there none of the descendants of Levi. Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and  
5 Meshullam, who were leaders, and for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were wise, and sent them to Iddo, the leader at the place called Casiphia, telling them what to say to Iddo and his colleagues the temple servants at Casiphia, namely, to send us ministers for the house of our God. Since the gracious hand of our God was upon us, they brought us a man of discretion, of the  
10 descendants of Mahli son of Levi son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, with his sons and kin, eighteen; also Hashabiah and with him Jeshaiiah of the descendants of Merari, with his kin and their sons, twenty; besides two hundred twenty of the temple servants, whom David and his officials had set apart to attend the Levites. These were all mentioned by name. Then I  
15 proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might deny ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our possessions. For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and cavalry to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king that the hand of our God is gracious to all who seek him,  
20 but his power and his wrath are against all who forsake him. So we fasted

and petitioned our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty. Then I set  
apart twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their kin  
with them. And I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the  
vessels, the offering for the house of our God that the king, his counselors,  
5 his lords, and all Israel there present had offered; I weighed out into their  
hand six hundred fifty talents of silver, and one hundred silver vessels  
worth...talents, and one hundred talents of gold, twenty gold bowls worth a  
thousand darics, and two vessels of fine polished bronze as precious as gold.  
And I said to them, "You are holy to the LORD, and the vessels are holy;  
10 and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of  
your ancestors. Guard them and keep them until you weigh them before the  
chief priests and the Levites and the heads of families in Israel at Jerusalem,  
within the chambers of the house of the LORD." So the priests and the  
Levites took over the silver, the gold, and the vessels as they were weighed  
15 out, to bring them to Jerusalem, to the house of our God. Then we left the  
river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go to Jerusalem; the  
hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the  
enemy and from ambushes along the way. We came to Jerusalem and  
remained there three days. On the fourth day, within the house of our God,  
20 the silver, the gold, and the vessels were weighed into the hands of the

priest Meremoth son of Uriah, and with him was Eleazar son of Phinehas,  
and with them were the Levites, Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of  
Binnui. The total was counted and weighed, and the weight of everything  
was recorded. At that time those who had come from captivity, the returned  
5 exiles, offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel,  
ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and as a sin offering twelve male  
goats; all this was a burnt offering to the LORD. They also delivered the  
king's commissions to the king's satraps and to the governors of the province  
Beyond the River; and they supported the people and the house of God.  
10 After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, "The  
people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves  
from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites,  
the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the  
Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken some of their daughters as  
15 wives for themselves and for their sons. Thus the holy seed has mixed itself  
with the peoples of the lands, and in this faithlessness the officials and  
leaders have led the way." When I heard this, I tore my garment and my  
mantle, and pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat appalled. Then all  
who trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the faithlessness  
20 of the returned exiles, gathered around me while I sat appalled until the

evening sacrifice. At the evening sacrifice I got up from my fasting, with my garments and my mantle torn, and fell on my knees, spread out my hands to the LORD my God, and said, "O my God, I am too ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen  
5 higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens. From the days of our ancestors to this day we have been deep in guilt, and for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been handed over to the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as is now the case. But now for a brief moment favor has been  
10 shown by the LORD our God, who has left us a remnant, and given us a stake in his holy place, in order that he may brighten our eyes and grant us a little sustenance in our slavery. For we are slaves; yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to give us new life to set up the house of our God, to  
15 repair its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judea and Jerusalem. "And now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments, which you commanded by your servants the prophets, saying, "The land that you are entering to possess is a land unclean with the pollutions of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations. They have  
20 filled it from end to end with their uncleanness. Therefore do not give your

daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, so that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.' After all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, seeing that

5 you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and have given us such a remnant as this, shall we break your commandments again and intermarry with the peoples who practice these abominations? Would you not be angry with us until you destroy us without remnant or survivor? O LORD, God of Israel, you are just, but we have escaped as a remnant, as is

10 now the case. Here we are before you in our guilt, though no one can face you because of this." While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him out of Israel; the people also wept bitterly. Shecaniah son of Jehiel, of the descendants of Elam, addressed

15 Ezra, saying, "We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, but even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this. So now let us make a covenant with our God to send away all these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done

20 according to the law. Take action, for it is your duty, and we are with you;

be strong, and do it." Then Ezra stood up and made the leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear that they would do as had been said. So they swore. Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God, and went to the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, where he spent the night. He did not  
5 eat bread or drink water, for he was mourning over the faithlessness of the exiles. They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at Jerusalem, and that if any did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all their property should be forfeited, and they themselves banned from the  
10 congregation of the exiles. Then all the people of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days; it was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. All the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain. Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have trespassed  
15 and married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel. Now make confession to the LORD the God of your ancestors, and do his will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives." Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice, "It is so; we must do as you have said. But the people are many, and it is a time of heavy rain; we  
20 cannot stand in the open. Nor is this a task for one day or for two, for

many of us have transgressed in this matter. Let our officials represent the whole assembly, and let all in our towns who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders and judges of every town, until the fierce wrath of our God on this account is averted from us." Only

5 Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levites supported them. Then the returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men, heads of families, according to their families, each of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to examine the matter. By the first day of the

10 first month they had come to the end of all the men who had married foreign women. There were found of the descendants of the priests who had married foreign women, of the descendants of Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. They pledged themselves to send away their wives, and their guilt offering was a ram of the flock for

15 their guilt. Of the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah. Of the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah. Of the descendants of Pashhur: Eliezer, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elashah. Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum,

20 Telem, and Uri. And of Israel: of the descendants of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah,



- Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah, and Benaiah. Of the descendants of  
Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah. Of the  
descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and  
Aziza. Of the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.
- 5 Of the descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and  
Jeremoth. Of the descendants of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah,  
Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. Of the descendants of  
Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, Benjamin, Malluch,  
and Shemariah. Of the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad,
- 10 Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. Of the descendants of Bani:  
Maadai, Amram, Uel, Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi, Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,  
Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu. Of the descendants of Binnui: Shimei,  
Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, Azarel, Shelemiah,  
Shemariah, Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. Of the descendants of Nebo: Jeiel,
- 15 Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah. All these had married  
foreign women, and they sent them away with their children. \*

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