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The First Book of Ezra

Introduction

The First Book of Ezra, also known as *1 Esdras*, recounts the fall of Yehudah (Judah) and the return of exiles to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). It begins with King Yoshiyah's (Josiah's) Passover celebration, follows the disasters that lead to exile in Bavel (Babylon), and then describes the return, the rebuilding of the temple, and the work of Ezra. Much of this will be familiar to readers of *The Chronicles*, *Ezra*, and *Nehemyah*, although the material is arranged differently.

A distinctive part of this account is the debate between three of King Dareyavesh's (Darius') guards about what is strongest. One argues for wine, another for the king, and Zorobabel argues for women before declaring that truth is stronger than everything. His success leads to royal support for the return to Yerushalem and the rebuilding of the temple.

The account emphasises restored worship, support for the temple, and the need to live according to God's instructions. It ends with Ezra reading and explaining the law to the assembled people, who respond with worship and celebration.

The First Book of Ezra is recognised as Deuterocanonical Scripture by the Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox Churches. It is not recognised by the Romaios Catholic Church, but 1 Ezra is placed as an appendix to the Latin Vulgate Bible.

Main components of this account

Yoshiyah's Passover and the fall of Yehudah *1:1-58*
Permission to return and opposition to rebuilding *2:1-30*
The guards' debate and Zorobabel's request *3:1–4:63*
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Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

Yoshiyah celebrates the Passover

1:1 Yoshiyah (Josiah) held the Passover in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) to his master, and offered the Passover the fourteenth day of the first month,[1] **2** having set the priests according to their daily courses, being arrayed in their vestments, in the master's temple. **3** He spoke to the Levites, Yisrael's (Israel's) temple servants,[2] that they should make themselves holy to the master, to set the holy ark of the master in the house that King Shelomoh (Solomon) the son of David had built. **4** He said, "You no longer need to carry it on your shoulders. Now therefore serve the master your god, and minister to his people Yisrael, and prepare yourselves by your fathers' houses and kindred, **5** according to the writing of King David of Yisrael, and according to the magnificence of Shelomoh his son. Stand in the holy place according to the divisions of your Levite families who minister in the presence of your kindred the descendants of Yisrael. **6** Offer the Passover in order, prepare the sacrifices for your kindred, and keep the Passover according to the master's commandment, which was given to Mosheh (Moses).

7 To the people which were present, Yoshiyah gave thirty thousand lambs and kids, and three thousand calves. These things were given from the king's possessions, as he promised, to the people and to the priests and Levites. **8** Hilkiyah, Zekaryah (Zechariah), and Yehiel,[3] the rulers of the temple, gave to the priests for the Passover two thousand and six hundred sheep, and three hundred calves. **9** Konaniyah, Shemayah, Netanel his brother, Hashavyah, Yeiel, and Yoram (Joram), captains over thousands, gave to the Levites for the Passover five thousand sheep and seven hundred calves.

10 When these things were done, the priests and Levites, having the unleavened bread, stood in proper order according to the kindred, **11** and according to the several divisions by fathers' houses, before the people, to offer to the master as it's written in the book of Mosheh. They did this in the morning. **12** They roasted the Passover lamb with fire, as required. They boiled the sacrifices in the brazen vessels and cauldrons with a pleasing smell, **13** and set them before all the people. Afterward they prepared for themselves and for their kindred the priests, the sons of Aharon (Aaron). **14** Because the priests offered the fat until night. The Levites prepared for themselves and for their kindred the priests, the sons of Aharon. **15** The holy singers also, the sons of Asaf, were in their order, according to the appointment of David: Asaf, Zekaryah, and Yedutun, who represented the king. **16** Moreover the gatekeepers were at every gate. No one needed to depart from his daily duties, for their kindred the Levites prepared for them.

17 So the things that belonged to the master's sacrifices were accomplished in that day, in holding the Passover, **18** and offering sacrifices on the altar of the master, according to King Yoshiyah's commandment. **19** So the Israeli people (Israel) which were present at that time held the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. **20** Such a Passover hadn't been held in Yisrael since the time of the prophet Shmuel (Samuel). **21** Indeed, none of Yisrael's kings held such a Passover as Yoshiyah with the priests, the Levites, and the Yehudim (Jews), held with all Yisrael that were present in their dwelling place at Yerushalem (Jerusalem). **22** This Passover was held in the eighteenth year of Yoshiyah's reign. **23** Yoshiyah's works were upright before his master with a heart full of godliness. **24** Moreover the things that happened in his days have been written in times past, about those who sinned and did wickedly against the master more than any other people or kingdom, and how they grieved him greatly,[4] so that the master's words were confirmed against Yisrael.

Yoshiyah is killed in battle

25 Now after all these acts of Yoshiyah (Josiah), it happened that Par'oh (Pharaoh) the king of Mitsrayim (Egypt) came to make war at Karkemish on the Perat (Euphrates); and Yoshiyah went out against him.[5] **26** But the king of Mitsrayim sent to him, saying, "What do I have to do with you, Oh king of Yehudah (Judea)? **27** I wasn't sent out from the master God against you, for my war is against the Perat. Now the master is with me, yes, the master is with me hastening me forward. Depart from me, and don't be against the master."

28 However, Yoshiyah didn't turn back to his chariot, but tried to fight with him, not regarding the words of the prophet Yirmiyah (Jeremiah) from the master's mouth, **29** but joined battle with him in the plain of Megidon, and the commanders came down against King Yoshiyah. **30** Then the king said to his servants, "Carry me away out of the battle, for I'm very weak!" Immediately his servants carried him away out of the army. **31** Then he got into his second chariot. After he was brought back to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) he died, and was buried in the tomb of his ancestors. **32** All Yehudah mourned for Yoshiyah. Yirmiyah the prophet lamented for Yoshiyah, and the chief men with the women made lamentation for him to this day. This was given out for an ordinance to be done continually in all the nation of Yisrael (Israel). **33** These things are written in the book of the histories of Yehudah's kings, and every one of the acts that Yoshiyah did, and his glory, and his understanding in the master's law, and the things that he'd done before, and the things now told, are reported in the book of the kings of Yisrael and Yehudah.

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1 **RV 1:1 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 23:21; 2Ch 35:1.

2 **RV 1:3 · Cross-ref.** Num 3:9.

3 **RV 1:8 · Note** Jehiel, 2 Chronicles 35:8.

4 **RV 1:24 · Note** Or, sensibly Judges 16:17.

5 **RV 1:25 · Cross-ref.** 2Ch 35:20.

Readers' Version

Yehudah's last kings and the fall of Yerushalem

34 The people took Yehoahaz[6] the son of Yoshiyah, and made him king instead of Yoshiyah his father, when he was twenty-three years old.[7] 35 He reigned in Yehudah and Yerushalem for three months. Then the king of Mitsrayim (Egypt) deposed him from reigning in Yerushalem. 36 He set a tax on the people of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. 37 The king of Mitsrayim also made King Yehoyakim his brother king of Yehudah and Yerushalem. 38 And Yehoyakim imprisoned the leading citizens and apprehended his brother Zarakes, and brought him up out of Mitsrayim.

39 Yehoyakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign in Yehudah and Yerushalem. He did that which was evil in the sight of the master.[8] 40 King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) of Bavel (Babylon) came up against him, bound him with a chain of brass, and carried him to Bavel. 41 Nevukadnetsar also took some of the master's holy vessels, carried them away, and stored them in his own temple at Bavel. 42 But those things that are reported of him, and of his uncleanness and impiety, are written in the records of the kings. 43 Then Yehoyakin his son reigned in his place. When he was made king, he was eighteen years old. 44 He reigned three months and ten days in Yerushalem. He did that which was evil before the master.

45 So after a year Nevukadnetsar sent and caused him to be brought to Bavel with the holy vessels of the master, 46 and made Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah) king of Yehudah and Yerushalem when he was twenty-one years old. He reigned eleven years. 47 He also did that which was evil in the sight of the master, and didn't heed the words that were spoken by Yirmiyah the prophet from the master's mouth. 48 After King Nevukadnetsar had made him to swear by the master's name, he broke his oath and rebelled. Hardening his neck and his heart, he transgressed the laws of the master, the god of Yisrael (Israel). 49 Moreover the governors of the people and of the priests did many things wickedly, exceeding all the defilements of all nations, and defiled the master's temple, which was sanctified in Yerushalem. 50 Their ancestors' god sent by his messenger to call them back, because he had compassion on them and on his dwelling place. 51 But they mocked his messengers. In the day when the master spoke, they scoffed at his prophets 52 until he, being angry with his people for their great ungodliness, commanded to bring up the kings of the Kasdim (Chaldeans) against them. 53 They killed their young men with the sword around their holy temple, and spared neither young man or young woman, old man or child; but he delivered all of them into their hands. 54 They took all the holy vessels of the master, both great and small, with the treasure chests of the master's ark and the king's treasures, and carried them away to Bavel. 55 They burnt the master's house, broke down Yerushalem's walls, and burnt its towers with fire. 56 As for her glorious things, they didn't stop until they'd brought them all to nothing. He carried the people who weren't slain with the sword to Bavel. 57 They were servants to him and to his children until the Persians reigned, to fulfil the master's word by Yirmiyah's mouth: 58 "Until the land has enjoyed its Sabbaths, the whole time of her desolation will she keep Sabbath, to fulfil seventy years.

Koresh allows the exiles to return

2:1 In the first year of King Koresh (Cyrus) of the Persians, that the master's word by Yirmiyah's (Jeremiah's) mouth might be accomplished,[9] 2 the master stirred up the spirit of King Koresh of the Persians, and he made an official announcement throughout all his kingdom, and also by writing, 3 saying, "Koresh king of the Persians says: The master of Yisrael (Israel), the Most High master, has made me king of the whole world, 4 and commanded me to build him a house at Yerushalem that's in Yehudah. 5 If therefore there are any of you that are of his people, let the master, even his master, be with him, and let him go up to Yerushalem that's in Yehudah, and build the house of the master of Yisrael. He's the master who lives in Yerushalem. 6 Therefore, of those who live in various places, let those who are in his own place help each one with gold, with silver, 7 with gifts, with horses, and cattle, beside the other things which have been added by vow for the master's temple which is in Yerushalem.

8 Then the chief of the families of Yehudah (Judah) and of the tribe of Benyamin stood up, with the priests, the Levites, and all whose spirit the master had stirred to go up, to build the house for the master which is in Yerushalem. 9 Those who lived around them helped them in all things with silver and gold, with horses and cattle, and with very many gifts that were vowed by a great number whose minds were so moved.

10 King Koresh also brought out the holy vessels of the master, which Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) had carried away from Yerushalem and had stored in his temple of idols. 11 Now when King Koresh of the Persians had brought them out, he delivered them to Mitredat his treasurer, 12 and by him they were delivered to Sheshebatsar[10] Yehudah's governor. 13 This was the number of them: one thousand gold cups, one thousand silver cups, twenty-nine silver censers, thirty gold bowls, two thousand and four hundred and ten silver bowls, and one thousand other vessels. 14 So all the vessels of gold and of silver were brought up, even five thousand and four hundred and seventy-nine, 15 and were carried back by Sheshebatsar, together with the returning exiles, from Bavel (Babylon) to

6 **RV 1:34 · Note** Another reading is, Jeconias.

7 **RV 1:34 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 23:30; 2Ch 36:1.

8 **RV 1:39 · Cross-ref.** 2Ch 36:4-5.

9 **RV 2:1 · Cross-ref.** 2Ch 36:22,23; Ezr 1:1.

10 **RV 2:12 · Note** Another reading is, Simanassar.

Readers' Version

Yerushalem.

Opposition stops the rebuilding of Yerushalem

16 In the time of King Artahshashta (Artaxerxes) of the Persians, Bishlam, Mitredat, Teve'el, Rehum,[11] Rehum, and Shimshay[12] the scribe, with their other associates, dwelling in Shomron (Samaria) and other places, wrote to him against those who lived in Yehudah and Yerushalem the following letter:[13]

17 "To King Artahshashta our master, from your servants, Rehum the recorder, Shimshay the scribe, and the rest of their council, and the judges who are in Coele-Syria and Foinikai: 18 Let it now be known to our lord the king, that the Yehudim (Jews) that have come up from you to us, having come to Yerushalem, are building that rebellious and wicked city, and are repairing its marketplaces and walls, and are laying the foundation of a temple. 19 Now if this city is built and its walls are finished, they won't only refuse to give tribute, but will even stand up against kings. 20 Since the things pertaining to the temple are now in hand, we think it appropriate not to neglect such a matter, 21 but to speak to our lord the king, to the intent that, if it's your pleasure, search may be made in the books of your ancestors. 22 You'll find in the records what's written about these things, and will understand that that city was rebellious, troubling both kings and cities, 23 and that the Yehudim were rebellious, and kept starting wars there in the past. Because this cause, this city was laid waste.
24 Therefore now we do declare to you, Oh lord the king, that if this city is built again, and its walls set up again, you'll from then on have no passage into Coele-Syria and Foinikai."

25 Then the king wrote back again to Rehum the recorder, Rehum, Shimshay the scribe, and to the rest that of their associates who lived in Shomron (Samaria), Aram (Syria), and Foinikai, as follows:

26 "I've read the letter which you've sent to me. Therefore I commanded to make search, and it's been found that that city of old time has fought against kings, 27 and the men were given to rebellion and war in it, and that mighty and fierce kings were in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), who reigned and exacted tribute in Coele-Syria and Foinikai.
28 Now therefore I've commanded to prevent those men from building the city, and heed to be taken that there be nothing done contrary to this order, 29 and that those wicked doings proceed no further to the annoyance of kings." 30 Then King Artahshashta (Artaxerxes), his letters being read, Rehum, and Shimshay the scribe, and the rest of their associates, went in haste to Yerushalem with cavalry and a multitude of people in battle array, and began to hinder the builders. So the building of the temple in Yerushalem ceased until the second year of the reign of King Dareyavesh (Darius) of the Persians.

Three guards debate what is strongest

3:1 Now King Dareyavesh made a great feast for all his subjects, for all who were born in his house, for all the princes of Maday (Media) and of Paras (Persia), 2 and for all the local governors and captains and governors who were under him, from Hodu to Kush (Ethiopia), in the one hundred and twenty seven provinces. 3 They ate and drank, and when they were satisfied went home. Then King Dareyavesh went into his bedchamber slept, but awakened out of his sleep.

4 Then the three young men of the bodyguard, who guarded the king, spoke one to another: 5 "Let every one of us state what one thing is strongest. King Dareyavesh will give he whose statement seems wiser than the others great gifts and great honours in token of victory. 6 He'll be clothed in purple, drink from gold cups, sleep on a gold bed, and have a chariot with bridles of gold, a fine linen turban, and a chain around his neck. 7 He'll sit next to Dareyavesh because of his wisdom, and will be called cousin of Dareyavesh."

8 Then they each wrote his sentence, sealed them, and laid them under King Dareyavesh' pillow, 9 and said, "When the king wakes up, someone will give him the writing. The one who the king and the three princes of Paras (Persia) judge that his sentence is the wisest, to him will the victory be given, as it's written." 10 The first wrote, "Wine is the strongest." 11 The second wrote, "The king is strongest." 12 The third wrote, "Women are strongest, but above all things Truth is the victor."

13 Now when the king woke up, they took the writing and gave it to him, so he read it. 14 Sending out, he called all the princes of Paras and of Maday (Media), the local governors, the captains, the governors, and the chief officers 15 and sat himself down in the royal seat of judgement; and the writing was read before them. 16 He said, "Call the young men, and they'll explain their own sentences. So they were called and came in.

The first guard argues for wine

17 They said to them, "Explain what you've written."

Then the first, who'd spoken of the strength of wine, began 18 and said this: "Oh sirs, how extremely strong wine is! It causes all men who drink it to go astray. 19 It makes the mind of the king and of the fatherless child to be the same, likewise of the bondman and of the freeman, of the poor man and of the rich. 20 It also turns every thought into cheer and mirth, so that a man remembers neither sorrow nor debt. 21 It makes every heart rich, so that a man remembers neither king nor local governor. It makes people say things in large amounts. 22 When they're in their cups, they forget their love both to friends and kindred, and before long draw their swords. 23 But when they awake from their wine, they don't remember what they've done. 24 Oh sirs, isn't wine the strongest, seeing that it

11 **RV 2:16 · Note** Rehum,

12 **RV 2:16 · Note** Shimshai.

13 **RV 2:16 · Cross-ref.** Ezr 4:7.

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forces people to do this?" And when he'd said this, he stopped speaking.

The second guard argues for the king

4:1 Then the second, who'd spoken of the king's strength, began to say, 2 "Oh sirs, don't men excel in strength who rule over the sea and land, and all things in them? 3 But yet the king is stronger. He's their lord and has dominion over them. In whatever he commands them, they obey him. 4 If he tells them to make war the one against the other, they do it. If he sends them out against the enemies, they go, and conquer mountains, walls, and towers. 5 They kill and are killed, and don't disobey the king's commandment. If they win the victory, they bring everything to the king—all the plunder and everything else. 6 Likewise for those who aren't soldiers, and don't have anything to do with wars, but farm, when they've again harvested what they'd sown, they bring some to the king and compel one another to pay tribute to the king. 7 He's just one man! If he commands people to kill, they kill. If he commands them to spare, they spare. 8 If he commands them to strike, they strike. If he commands them to make desolate, they make desolate. If he commands to build, they build. 9 If he commands them to cut down, they cut down. If he commands them to plant, they plant. 10 So all his people and his armies obey him. Furthermore, he lies down, he eats and drinks, and takes his rest; 11 and these keep watch around him. None of them may depart and do his own business. They don't disobey him in anything. 12 Oh sirs, how could the king not be the strongest, seeing that he's obeyed like this?" Then he stopped talking.

Zorobabel argues for women

13 Then the third, who'd spoken of women, and of truth, (this was Zorobabel) began to speak: 14 "Oh sirs, isn't the king great, and men are many, and isn't wine strong? Who's it then who rules them, or has the lordship over them? Aren't they women? 15 Women have given birth to the king and all the people who rule over sea and land. 16 They came from women. Women nourished up those who planted the vineyards, from where the wine comes. 17 Women also make clothes for men. These bring glory to men. Without women, men can't exist. 18 Yes, and if men have gathered together gold and silver and any other beautiful thing, and see a woman who's lovely in appearance and beauty, 19 they let all those things go and gape at her, and with open mouth stare at her. They all have more desire for her than for gold, or silver, or any other beautiful thing. 20 A man leaves his own father who brought him up, leaves his own country, and joins with his wife. 21 With his wife he ends his days, with no thought for his father, mother, or country. 22 By this also you must know that women have dominion over you. Don't you labour and toil, and bring it all to give to women? 23 Yes, a man takes his sword and goes out to travel, to rob, to steal, and to sail on the sea and on rivers. 24 He sees a lion and walks in the darkness. When he's stolen, plundered, and robbed, he brings it to the woman he loves. 25 Therefore a man loves his wife better than father or mother. 26 Yes, there are many who've lost their minds for women, and become slaves for their sakes. 27 Many also have perished, have stumbled, and sinned, for women. 28 Now don't you believe me? Isn't the king great in his power? Don't all regions fear to touch him? 29 Yet I saw him and Apame the king's concubine, the daughter of the illustrious Barticus, sitting at the right hand of the king, 30 and taking the crown from the king's head, and setting it onto her own head. Yes, she struck the king with her left hand. 31 At this, the king gaped and gazed at her with open mouth. If she smiles at him, he laughs. But if she takes any displeasure at him, he flatters her, that she might be reconciled to him again. 32 Oh sirs, how can it not be that women are strong, seeing they do this?"

Truth is stronger than everything

33 Then the king and the leading citizens looked at one another. So he began to speak about truth. 34 "Oh sirs, aren't women strong? The earth is great. The sky is high. The sun is swift in its course, for it circles around the sky, and returns on its course again in one day. 35 Isn't he who makes these things great? Therefore the truth is great, and stronger than all things. 36 All the earth calls on truth, and the sky blesses truth. All works shake and tremble, but with truth there's no unrighteous thing. 37 Wine is unrighteous. The king is unrighteous. Women are unrighteous. All the children of men are unrighteous, and all their works are unrighteous. There's no truth in them. They'll also perish in their unrighteousness. 38 But truth remains, and is strong forever. Truth lives and conquers forevermore. 39 With truth there's no partiality towards persons or rewards, but truth does the things that are just, instead of any unrighteous or wicked things. All men approve truth's works. 40 In truth's judgement isn't any unrighteousness. Truth is the strength, the kingdom, the power, and the majesty of all ages. Blessed be the god of truth!"

41 With that, he stopped speaking. Then all the people shouted and said, "Great is truth, and strong above all things!"

Zorobabel asks to rebuild Yerushalem

42 Then the king said to him, "Ask what you wish, even more than is appointed in writing, and we'll give it to you, because you're found wisest. You'll sit next me, and will be called my cousin."

43 Then he said to the king, "Remember your vow, which you vowed to build Yerushalem (Jerusalem), in the day when you came to your kingdom, 44 and to send back all the vessels that were taken out of Yerushalem, which Koresh (Cyrus) set apart when he vowed to destroy Bavel (Babylon), and vowed to send them back there. 45 You also vowed to build the temple which the Edomim burnt when Yehudah (Judea) was made desolate by the Kasdim (Chaldeans). 46 Now, Oh lord the king, this is what I request, and what I desire of you, and this is the princely generosity that may proceed from you: I ask therefore that you make good the vow, the performance of which you've vowed to the King of Heaven with your own mouth."

47 Then King Dareyavesh (Darius) stood up, kissed him,

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and wrote letters for him to all the treasurers and governors and captains and local governors, that they should safely bring on their way both him, and all those who'd go up with him to build Yerushalem. 48 He wrote letters also to all the governors who were in Coele-Syria and Foinikai, and to them in Levanon, that they should bring cedar wood from Levanon to Yerushalem, and that they should help him build the city. 49 Moreover he wrote for all the Yehudim (Jews) who'd go out of his realm up into Yehudah about their freedom, that no officer, no governor, no local governor, nor treasurer, should forcibly enter into their doors, 50 and that all the country which they occupied should be free to them without tribute, and that the Edomim should give up the villages of the Yehudim which they held at that time, 51 and that there should be given twenty talents yearly towards the building of the temple, until the time that it was built, 52 and another ten talents yearly for burnt offerings to be presented on the altar every day, as they had a commandment to make seventeen offerings, 53 and that all those who'd come from Bavel (Babylon) to build the city should have their freedom—they and their descendants, and all the priests that came. 54 He wrote also to give them their support and the priests' vestments in which they minister. 55 Because the Levites he wrote that their support should be given them until the day that the house was finished and Yerushalem built up. 56 He commanded that land and wages should be given to all who guarded the city. 57 He also sent away all the vessels from Bavel that Koresh (Cyrus) had set apart, and all that Koresh had given in commandment, he commanded also to be done and to be sent to Yerushalem.

58 Now when this young man had gone out, he lifted up his face to heaven towards Yerushalem, and praised the King of heaven, 59 and said, "From you comes victory. From you comes wisdom. Yours is the glory, and I'm your servant. 60 Blessed are you, who've given me wisdom. I give thanks to you, Oh master of our fathers. 61 So he took the letters, went out, came to Bavel, and told it all his kindred. 62 They praised the god of their ancestors, because he'd given them freedom and liberty 63 to go up and to build Yerushalem and the temple which is called by his name. They feasted with instruments of music and gladness seven days.

The families returning from exile

5:1 After this, the chiefs of fathers' houses were chosen to go up according to their tribes, with their wives, sons, and daughters, with their male servants and female servants, and their livestock. 2 Dareyavesh (Darius) sent with them one thousand cavalry to bring them back to Yerushalem with peace, with musical instruments, drums, and flutes. 3 All their kindred were making merry, and he made them go up together with them.

4 These are the names of the men who went up, according to their families among their tribes, after their several divisions. 5 The priests, the sons of Pinhas, the sons of Aharon (Aaron): Yeshua (Jesus) the son of Yotsadak, the son of Serayah, and Yoyakim the son of Zorobabel, the son of Salathiail, of the house of David, of the lineage of Perets, of the tribe of Yehudah (Judah), 6 who spoke wise words before Dareyavesh the king of Paras (Persia) in the second year of his reign, in the month Nisan, which is the first month.

7 These are the of Yehudim (Jews) who came up from the captivity, where they lived as foreigners, whom Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) the king of Bavel (Babylon) had carried away to Bavel.[14] 8 They returned to Yerushalem and to the other parts of Yehudah, every man to his own city, who came with Zorobabel, with Yeshua, Nehemyah (Nehemiah), Serayah,[15] Resaias, Eneneus,[16] Mordekai, Bilshan, Mispar,[17] Re'elayah,[18] Roimus, and Ba'ana, their leaders.

9 The number of them of the nation and their leaders: the sons of Par'osh, two thousand and one hundred and seventy two; the sons of[19] Saphat, four hundred and seventy two; 10 the sons of[20] Arah, seven hundred and fifty six; 11 the sons of[21] Pahat-Moav, of the sons of Yeshua and Yoav (Joab), two thousand and eight hundred and twelve; 12 the sons of Eylam, one thousand and two hundred and fifty four; the sons of[22] Zatu, nine hundred and forty five; the sons of[23] Zakay, seven hundred and five; the sons of Bani, six hundred and forty eight; 13 the sons of Bevay, six hundred and twenty three; the sons of[24] Azgad,[25] one thousand and three hundred and twenty two; 14 the sons of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty seven; the sons of[26] Big-

14 **RV 5:7 · Cross-ref.** Ezr 2:1.
15 **RV 5:8 · Note** Seralah.
16 **RV 5:8 · Note** Or, Enenis.
17 **RV 5:8 · Note** Mispar.
18 **RV 5:8 · Note** Reclaiah
19 **RV 5:9 · Note** Shephatiah.
20 **RV 5:10 · Note** Arah.
21 **RV 5:11 · Note** Pahath-moab.
22 **RV 5:12 · Note** Zattu.
23 **RV 5:12 · Note** Zaccai.
24 **RV 5:13 · Note** Asgad.
25 **RV 5:13 · Note** According to other readings, 3622, or 3222.
26 **RV 5:14 · Note** Bigvai.

Readers' Version

vay, two thousand and sixty six; the sons of[27] Adin, four hundred and fifty four; 15 the sons of[28] Ater, of Hizkiyah (Hezekiah), ninety two; the sons of Kilan and Azetas, sixty seven; the sons of[29] Azaru, four hundred and thirty two; 16 the sons of[30] Annis, one hundred and one; the sons of Arom, the sons of[31] Betsay, three hundred and twenty three; the sons of Arsiphurith, one hundred and twelve; 17 the sons of Baiterus, three thousand and five; the sons of[32] Beyt-Lehem (Bethlehem), one hundred and twenty three; 18 those from Netofah, fifty five; those from Anatot, one hundred and fifty eight; those from[33] Azmavet, forty two; 19 those from Kiryat-Yearim,[34] twenty five: those from Kefirah and Be'erot, seven hundred and forty three; 20 the Chadiasai and Ammidioi, four hundred and twenty two; those from Ramah[35] and Geva,[36] six hundred and twenty one; 21 those from Mikmas,[37] one hundred and twenty two; those from Beyt-El (Bethel),[38] fifty two; the sons of Magbish,[39] one hundred and fifty six; 22 the sons of Calamolalus[40] and Ono,[41] seven hundred and twenty five; the sons of Yeriho (Jericho),[42] three[43] hundred and forty five; 23 and the sons of Sena'ah,[44] three thousand and three hundred and thirty.

24 The priests: the sons of Yedayah,[45] the son of Yeshua (Jesus), among the sons of Sanasib, nine hundred and seventy two; the sons of Imer,[46] one thousand and fifty two; 25 the sons of Pashhur,[47] one thousand and two hundred and forty seven; and the sons of Harim,[48] one thousand and seventeen. 26 The Levites: the sons of Yeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, and Hodavyah, seventy four. 27 The holy singers: the sons of Asaf, one hundred and twenty eight. 28 The gatekeepers: the sons of[49] Shalum, the sons of[50] Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of[51] Akuv, the sons of[52] Hatita, the sons of[53] Shovay, in all one hundred and thirty nine.

29 The temple servants: the sons of[54] Esav (Esau), the sons of[55] Hasufa, the sons of Tabaeot, the sons of[56] Keyros, the sons of[57] Siea, the sons of[58] Padon, the sons of Levana, the sons of[59] Hagava. 30 the sons of[60] Akuv, the sons of Uta, the sons of Ketab, the sons of[61] Hagav, the sons of[62] Shamlay,

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27 **RV 5:14 · Note** Adin.
28 **RV 5:15 · Note** Ater of Hezekiah.
29 **RV 5:15 · Note** Another reading is, Azuru.
30 **RV 5:16 · Note** Another reading is, Annias.
31 **RV 5:16 · Note** Bezai.
32 **RV 5:17 · Note** Bethlehem.
33 **RV 5:18 · Note** Azmaveth.
34 **RV 5:19 · Note** Kiryat-Arim or Kiryat-Yearim.
35 **RV 5:20 · Note** Rumah.
36 **RV 5:20 · Note** Geba.
37 **RV 5:21 · Note** Michmas.
38 **RV 5:21 · Note** Bethel.
39 **RV 5:21 · Note** Magbish
40 **RV 5:22 · Note** Lod, Hadid.
41 **RV 5:22 · Note** Ono.
42 **RV 5:22 · Note** Yeriho/Jericho.
43 **RV 5:22 · Note** Another reading is, two
44 **RV 5:23 · Note** Senaah.
45 **RV 5:24 · Note** Jedaiah.
46 **RV 5:24 · Note** Immer.
47 **RV 5:25 · Note** Pashhur.
48 **RV 5:25 · Note** Harim.
49 **RV 5:28 · Note** Shallum.
50 **RV 5:28 · Note** Ater.
51 **RV 5:28 · Note** Akkub.
52 **RV 5:28 · Note** Hatita.
53 **RV 5:28 · Note** Shobai.
54 **RV 5:29 · Note** Ziha.
55 **RV 5:29 · Note** Hasupha.
56 **RV 5:29 · Note** Keros.
57 **RV 5:29 · Note** Siaha.
58 **RV 5:29 · Note** Padon.
59 **RV 5:29 · Note** Hagaba.
60 **RV 5:30 · Note** Akkub.
61 **RV 5:30 · Note** Hagab.
62 **RV 5:30 · Note** Shamlai.

Readers' Version

the sons of[63] Anan, the sons of[64] Gidel, the sons of[65] Gahar,
31 the sons of[66] Yair, the sons of[67] Retsin, the sons of[68]
Nekoda, the sons of Chaseba, the sons of[69] Gazam, the sons
of[70] Ozias, the sons of[71] Paseah, the sons of Asara, the sons
of[72] Besay, the sons of[73] Asnah, the sons of[74] Meunim, the
sons of[75] Nafish, the sons of[76] Bakbuk, the sons of[77] Hakufa,
the sons of[78] Harhur, the sons of Pharakim, the sons of[79]
Batslut, **32** the sons of[80] Mehida, the sons of Cutha, the sons
of[81] Harsha, the sons of[82] Barkos, the sons of[83] Sisera, the
sons of[84] Temah, the sons of[85] Netsiah, the sons of Hatifa.

33 The sons of Shelomoh's (Solomon's) servants: the sons
of[86] Soferet, the sons of[87] Perida, the sons of[88] Ya'alah, the
sons of[89] Darkon, the sons of[90] Isdael, the sons of[91] She-
fatyah, **34** the sons of[92] Hatil, the sons of[93] Pok-
eret-Hatsvayim, the sons of Sabie, the sons of Sarothie, the
sons of[94] Masias, the sons of Gas, the sons of Addus, the
sons of Subas, the sons of Apherra, the sons of Barodis, the
sons of Saphat, the sons of Alon.

35 All the temple-servants and the sons of Shelomoh's
servants were three hundred and seventy two. **36** These
came up from[95] Tel-Melah, and[96] Tel-Harsha,[97] Charaatha-
lan leading them, and Allar; **37** and they couldn't show
their families, nor their stock, how they were of Yisrael (Is-
rael): the sons of[98] Delayah the son of[99] Ban, the sons of[100]
Nekoda, six hundred and fifty two.

38 Of the priests, those who usurped the office of the
priesthood and weren't found: the sons of[101] Havayah, the
sons of[102] Hakots, the sons of Jaddus, who married Augia
one of the daughters of[103] Barzilay, and was called after his
name. **39** When the description of the kindred of these men

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63 **RV 5:30 · Note** Hanan.
64 **RV 5:30 · Note** Giddel.
65 **RV 5:30 · Note** Gahar
66 **RV 5:31 · Note** Reaiah.
67 **RV 5:31 · Note** Rezin.
68 **RV 5:31 · Note** Nekoda.
69 **RV 5:31 · Note** Gazzam.
70 **RV 5:31 · Note** Uzza.
71 **RV 5:31 · Note** Paseah.
72 **RV 5:31 · Note** Besai.
73 **RV 5:31 · Note** Asnah.
74 **RV 5:31 · Note** Meunim.
75 **RV 5:31 · Note** Nephisim.
76 **RV 5:31 · Note** Bakbuk. According to other readings, Acum, or Acuph.
77 **RV 5:31 · Note** Hakupha.
78 **RV 5:31 · Note** Harhur.
79 **RV 5:31 · Note** Bazluth.
80 **RV 5:32 · Note** Mehida.
81 **RV 5:32 · Note** Harsha
82 **RV 5:32 · Note** Barkos.
83 **RV 5:32 · Note** Sisera.
84 **RV 5:32 · Note** Temah
85 **RV 5:32 · Note** Neziah. Another reading is, Nasith.
86 **RV 5:33 · Note** Hussophereth.
87 **RV 5:33 · Note** Peruda.
88 **RV 5:33 · Note** Jaalah.
89 **RV 5:33 · Note** Darkon.
90 **RV 5:33 · Note** Giddel.
91 **RV 5:33 · Note** Shephatia.
92 **RV 5:34 · Note** Hattil.
93 **RV 5:34 · Note** Pochereth-haz-zebaim, Ezra 2:57.
94 **RV 5:34 · Note** Another reading is, Misaias.
95 **RV 5:36 · Note** Telmelah.
96 **RV 5:36 · Note** Telharsha.
97 **RV 5:36 · Note** Cherub. Addan.
98 **RV 5:37 · Note** Delaiah. Another reading is, Asan.
99 **RV 5:37 · Note** Tobiah Another reading is, Baenan.
100 **RV 5:37 · Note** Nekoda.
101 **RV 5:38 · Note** Habaiah, or Hobaiah.
102 **RV 5:38 · Note** Hakkoz.
103 **RV 5:38 · Note** Barzillai. Another reading is, Phaezeldaeus.

Readers' Version

was searched for in the register and wasn't found, they were removed from executing the office of the priesthood; 40 for Nehemyah (Nehemiah) and Attharias told them that they shouldn't be partakers of the holy things until a high priest wearing[104] Urim and Tumim should arise.

41 So all those of Yisrael, from twelve years old and upward, beside male servants and women servants, were in number forty two thousand and three hundred and sixty. 42 Their male servants and handmaids were seven thousand and three hundred and thirty and seven; the minstrels and singers, two hundred and forty five; 43 four hundred and thirty and five camels, seven thousand and thirty six horses, two hundred and forty five mules, and five thousand and five hundred and twenty five animals of burden.

44 And some of the chief men of their families, when they came to God's temple that's in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), vowed to set up the house again in its own place according to their ability, 45 and to give into the holy treasury of the works one thousand minas[105] of gold, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly vestments.

46 The priests and the Levites and some of the people lived in Yerushalem and the country. The holy singers also and the gatekeepers and all Yisrael lived in their villages.

Worship resumes at the rebuilt altar

47 But when the seventh month was at hand, and when the Israeli people were each in their own place, they all came together with one purpose into the broad place before the first porch which is towards the east. 48 Then Yeshua the son of Yotsadak, his kindred the priests, Zorobabel the son of Salathiail, and his kindred stood up and made the altar of the god of Yisrael ready 49 to offer burnt sacrifices on it, in accordance with the express commands in the book of Mosheh (Moses) the man of God. 50 Some people joined them out of the other nations of the land, and they erected the altar onto its own place, because all the nations of the land were hostile to them and oppressed them; and they offered sacrifices at the proper times and burnt offerings to the master both morning and evening. 51 They also held the feast of tabernacles, as it's commanded in the law, and offered sacrifices daily, as appropriate. 52 After that, they offered the continual oblations and the sacrifices of the Sabbaths, of the new moons, and of all the consecrated feasts. 53 All those who'd made any vow to God began to offer sacrifices to God from the new moon of the seventh month, although God's temple wasn't yet built. 54 They gave money, food, and drink to the masons and carpenters. 55 They also gave carts to the people of Tsidon (Sidon) and Tsor (Tyre), that they should bring cedar trees from Levanon, and convey them in rafts to the harbour of Yafo (Joppa), according to the commandment which was written for them by Koresh (Cyrus) king of the Persians.

The temple foundations are laid

56 In the second year after his coming to God's temple at Yerushalem (Jerusalem), in the second month, Zorobabel the son of Salathiail, Yeshua (Jesus) the son of Yotsadak, their kindred, the Levitical priests, and all those who'd come to Yerushalem out of the captivity began work. 57 They laid the foundation of God's temple on the new moon of the second month, in the second year after they'd come to Yehudah (Judea) and Yerushalem. 58 They appointed the Levites who were at least twenty years old over the master's works. Then Yeshua, with his sons and kindred, Kadmiel his brother, the sons of Yeshua, Emadabun, and the sons of Yoda the son of Henadad, and their sons and kindred, all the Levites, with one accord stood up and started the business, labouring to advance the works in God's house. So the builders built the master's temple.[106]

59 The priests stood arrayed in their vestments with musical instruments and trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaf with their cymbals, 60 singing songs of thanksgiving and praising the master, according to the directions of King David of Yisrael (Israel). 61 They sang aloud, praising the master in songs of thanksgiving, because his goodness and his glory are forever in all Yisrael. 62 All the people sounded trumpets and shouted with a loud voice, singing songs of thanksgiving to the master for the raising up of the master's house. 63 Some of the Levitical priests and of the heads of their families, the elderly who'd seen the former house came to the building of this one with lamentation and great weeping.[107] 64 But many with trumpets and joy shouted with a loud voice, 65 so that the people couldn't hear the trumpets for the weeping of the people, for the multitude sounded loudly, so that it was heard far away.

Opposition to rebuilding the temple

66 Therefore when the enemies of the tribe of Yehudah (Judah) and Benyamin heard it, they came to know what that noise of trumpets meant.[108] 67 They learnt that those who returned from captivity built the temple for the master, the god of Yisrael. 68 So they went to Zorobabel and Yeshua, and to the chief men of the families, and said to them, "We'll build together with you. 69 Because we, just like you, obey your master, and sacrifice to him from the days of King Esar-Hadon[109] of the Assyrians, who brought us here."

70 Then Zorobabel, Yeshua (Jesus) and the chief men of the families of Yisrael said to them, "It isn't for you to build the house for the master our god. 71 We ourselves alone will build for the master of Yisrael, as King Koresh

104 RV 5:40 · Note Grk. the manifestation and truth.

105 RV 5:45 · Note A mina is about 570 grams or 1.25 pounds.

106 RV 5:58 · Cross-ref. Ezr 3:8-9.

107 RV 5:63 · Cross-ref. Ezr 3:12-13.

108 RV 5:66 · Cross-ref. Ezr 4:1.

109 RV 5:69 · Note Another reading is, Asbacaphath.

Readers' Version

(Cyrus) of the Persians has commanded us." 72 But the heathen of the land pressed hard on the inhabitants of Yehudah, cut off their supplies, and hindered their building. 73 By their secret plots, and popular persuasions and commotions, they hindered the finishing of the building all the time that King Koresh lived. So they were hindered from building for two years, until Dareyavesh's reign.

The rebuilding resumes

6:1 Now in the second year of Dareyavesh's (Darius') reign, Hagay and Zekaryah (Zechariah) the son of[110] Ido, the prophets, prophesied to the Yehudim (Jews) in Yehudah and Yerushalem (Jerusalem) in the name of the master, the god of Yisrael.[111] 2 Then Zorobabel the son of Salathiail and Yeshua the son of Yotsadak stood up and began to build the master's house at Yerushalem, the master's prophets being with them and helping them.

3 At the same time Tatenay[112] the governor of Aram (Syria) and Foinikai came to them, with Shetar-Bozenay[113] and his companions, and said to them,[114] 4 "By whose authority do you build this house and this roof, and perform all the other things? Who are the builders who do these things?" 5 Nevertheless, the elders of the Yehudim obtained favour, because the master had visited the captives; 6 and they weren't hindered from building until such time as communication was made to Dareyavesh about them, and his answer received.

The officials ask Dareyavesh to investigate

7 A copy of the letter which Tatenay, governor of Aram and Foinikai, and Shetar-Bozenay, with their companions, the rulers in Aram and Foinikai, wrote and sent to Dareyavesh:

8 "To King Dareyavesh, greetings. Let it be fully known to our lord the king, that having come into the country of Yehudah (Judea), and entered into the city of Yerushalem, we found in the city of Yerushalem the elders of the Yehudim that were of the captivity 9 building a great new house for the master of hewn and costly stones, with timber laid in the walls. 10 Those works are being done with great speed. The work goes on prosperously in their hands, and it's being accomplished with all glory and diligence. 11 Then asked we these elders, saying, 'By whose authority are you building this house and laying the foundations of these works?' 12 Therefore, to the intent that we might give knowledge to you by writing who were the leaders, we questioned them, and we required of them the names in writing of their principal men. 13 So they gave us this answer, 'We're the servants of the master who made heaven and earth. 14 As for this house, it was built many years ago by a great and strong king of Yisrael (Israel), and was finished. 15 But when our fathers sinned against the master of Yisrael who's in heaven, and provoked him to anger, he gave them over into the hands of King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) of Bavel, king of the Kasdim (Chaldeans). 16 They pulled down the house, burnt it, and carried away the people captive to Bavel. 17 But in the first year that Koresh (Cyrus) reigned over the country of Bavel, King Koresh wrote that this house should be rebuilt. 18 The holy vessels of gold and of silver that Nevukadnetsar had carried away out of the house at Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and had set up in his own temple, those King Koresh brought out of the temple in Bavel, and they were delivered to Zorobabel and to Sheshebatsar[115] the governor, 19 with commandment that he should carry away all these vessels, and put them in the temple at Yerushalem, and that the master's temple should be built on its site. 20 Then Sheshebatsar, having come here, laid the foundations of the master's house which is in Yerushalem. From that time to this we're still building. It isn't yet fully completed.' 21 Now therefore, if it seems good, Oh king, let a search be made among the royal archives of our lord the king that are in Bavel. 22 If it's found that the building of the master's house which is in Yerushalem has been done with the consent of King Koresh, and it seems good to our lord the king, let him send us directions about these things."

Dareyavesh orders support for the rebuilding

23 Then King Dareyavesh (Darius) commanded that a search be made among the archives that were laid up at Bavel (Babylon). So at Ahmeta the palace, which is in the country of Maday (Media), a scroll was found where these things were recorded:[116] 24 "In the first year of Koresh's reign, King Koresh commanded to build up the master's house which is in Yerushalem, where they sacrifice with continual fire. 25 Its height will be sixty cubits, and the breadth sixty cubits, with three rows of hewn stones, and one row of new wood from that country. Its expenses are to be given out of King Koresh's house. 26 The holy vessels of the master's house, both gold and silver, that Nevukadnetsar took out of the house at Yerushalem and carried away to Bavel, should be restored to the house at Yerushalem, and be set in the place where they were before." 27 Also he commanded that Tatenay the governor of Aram (Syria) and Foinikai, and Shetar-Bozenay, and their companions, and those who were appointed rulers in Aram and Foinikai, should be careful not to meddle with the place, but allow Zorobabel, the master's servant, and governor of Yehudah (Judea), and the elders of the Yehudim (Jews), to build that house of the master in its place. 28 "I also command to have it built up whole again; and that

110 **RV 6:1 · Note** Iddo. Another reading is, Eddin

111 **RV 6:1 · Cross-ref.** Ezr 4:24; 5:1.

112 **RV 6:3 · Note** Tattenai.

113 **RV 6:3 · Note** Shetharbozenai

114 **RV 6:3 · Cross-ref.** Ezr 5:3.

115 **RV 6:18 · Note** Another reading is, Sabunassarus.

116 **RV 6:23 · Cross-ref.** Ezr 6:1.

Readers' Version

they look diligently to help those who are of the captivity of Yehudah, until the master's house is finished, 29 and that out of the tribute of Coele-Syria and Foinikai a portion will be carefully given to these men for the sacrifices of the master, that is, to Zorobabel the governor for bulls, rams, and lambs, 30 and also corn, salt, wine and oil, and that continually every year without further question, according as the priests who are in Yerushalem may direct to be daily spent, 31 that drink offerings may be made to the Most High God for the king and for his children, and that they may pray for their lives." 32 He commanded that whoever should transgress, yes, or neglect anything written here, a beam will be taken out of his own house, and he'll be hanged on it, and all his goods seized for the king.
33 "Therefore may the master, whose name is called on there, utterly destroy every king and nation that stretches out his hand to hinder or damage that house of the master in Yerushalem. 34 I, King Dareyavesh have ordained that these things be done with diligence."

The completed temple is dedicated

7:1 Then Tatenay the governor of Coele-Syria and Foinikai, and Shetar-Bozenay, with their companions, following King Dareyavesh's (Darius') commandments,[117] 2 very carefully supervised the holy work, assisting the elders of the Yehudim (Jews) and rulers of the temple. 3 So the holy work prospered, while Hagay and Zekaryah (Zechariah) the prophets prophesied. 4 They finished these things by the commandment of the master, the god of Yisrael, and with the consent of Koresh (Cyrus), Dareyavesh, and Artahshashta (Artaxerxes), kings of the Persians. 5 So the holy house was finished by the twenty-third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of King Dareyavesh. 6 The Israeli people, the priests, the Levites, and the others who returned from captivity who joined them did what was written in the book of Mosheh (Moses). 7 Because the dedication of the master's temple, they offered one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, 8 and twelve male goats for the sin of all Yisrael, according to the number of the twelve princes of the tribes of Yisrael. 9 The priests and the Levites stood arrayed in their vestments, according to their kindred, for the services of the master, the god of Yisrael, according to the book of Mosheh. The gatekeepers were at every gate.

The returned exiles celebrate the Passover

10 The Israeli people (Israel) who came out of captivity held the Passover the fourteenth day of the first month, when the priests and the Levites were sanctified together, 11 with all those who returned from captivity; for they were sanctified. Because the Levites were all sanctified together, 12 and they offered the Passover for all who returned from captivity, for their kindred the priests, and for themselves. 13 The Israeli people who came out of the captivity ate, even all those who'd separated themselves from the abominations of the heathen of the land, and followed after the master. 14 They kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days, rejoicing before the master, 15 because he'd turned the counsel of the king of Ashur (Assyria) towards them, to strengthen their hands in the works of the master, the god of Yisrael.

Ezra comes to Yerushalem

8:1 After these things, when Artahshashta (Artaxerxes) the king of the Persians reigned, Ezra came, who was the son of Azaryah, the son of Zekaryah (Zechariah), the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Shalem,[118] 2 the son of Tsadok, the son of Ahituv, the son of Amaryah, the son of Ozias,[119] the son of Merayot, the son of Zerahyah, the son of Zerahyah, the son of Buki, the son of Avishua, the son of Pinhas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aharon (Aaron), the chief priest.
3 This Ezra went up from Bavel (Babylon) as a skilled scribe in Mosheh's (Moses') law, which was given by the god of Yisrael. 4 The king honoured him, for he found favour in his sight in all his requests. 5 There went up with him also some of the Israeli people, and of the priests, Levites, holy singers, gatekeepers, and temple servants to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) 6 in the seventh year of Artahshashta's reign, in the fifth month (this was the king's seventh year); for they left Bavel on the new moon of the first month and came to Yerushalem, by the prosperous journey which the master gave them[120] for his sake. 7 Because Ezra had very great skill, so that he omitted nothing of the law and commandments of the master, but taught all Yisrael the ordinances and judgements.

The king's letter authorising Ezra's work

8 Now the commission, which was written from King Artahshashta, came to Ezra the priest and reader of the master's law, was as follows:
9 "King Artahshashta to Ezra the priest and reader of the master's law, greetings. 10 Having determined to deal graciously, I've given orders that those of the nation of the Yehudim (Jews), and of the priests and Levites, and of those within our realm who are willing and freely choose to, should go with you to Yerushalem. 11 As many therefore as are so disposed, let them depart with you, as it's seemed good both to me and my seven friends the counsellors, 12 that they may look to the affairs of Yehudah (Judea) and Yerushalem, in accordance with what's in the master's law, 13 and carry the gifts to the master of Yisrael to Yerushalem, which I and my friends have vowed, and that all the gold and silver that can be found in the country of Bavel for the master in Yerushalem, 14 with that also which is given of the people for the temple of the master their god that's at Yerushalem, be collected: even the gold and silver for bulls, rams, and lambs, and what goes with them, 15 to the end that they may offer sacrifices to the

117 RV 7:1 · Cross-ref. Ezr 6:13.

118 RV 8:1 · Cross-ref. Ezr 7:1.

119 RV 8:2 · Note The Vatican MS. omits the son of Memeroth, the son of Zaraias, the son of Savias.

120 RV 8:6 · Note Some MSS. omit for his sake.

Readers' Version

master on the altar of the master their god, which is in Yerushalem. 16 Whatever you and your kindred decide to do with gold and silver, do that according to your god's will. 17 The holy vessels of the master, which are given you for the use of your god's temple, which is in Yerushalem, 18 and whatever else you remember for the use of your god's temple, give it out of the king's treasury. 19 I, King Artahshashta (Artaxerxes), have also commanded the keepers of the treasures in Aram (Syria) and Foinikai, that whatever Ezra the priest and reader of the Most High God's law sends for, they should give it to him with all diligence, 20 to the sum of one hundred talents of silver, likewise also of wheat even to one hundred cors,[121] and one hundred firkins[122] of wine, and[123] salt in abundance. 21 Let all things be performed after God's law diligently to the most high God, that anger come not onto the kingdom of the king and his sons. 22 I command you also that no tax, nor any other imposition, be laid on any of the priests, or Levites, or holy singers, or gatekeepers, or temple servants, or any that have employment in this temple, and that no man has authority to impose any tax on them. 23 You, Ezra, according to God's wisdom, ordain judges and justices that they may judge in all Aram and Foinikai all those who know your god's law; and those who don't know it, you must teach. 24 Anyone who transgresses the law of your god and of the king will be punished diligently, whether it be by death, or other punishment, by penalty of money, or by imprisonment."

25 Then Ezra the scribe said, "Blessed be the only master, the god of my fathers, who's put these things into the king's heart, to glorify his house that's in Yerushalem, 26 and has honoured me in the sight of the king, his counsellors, and all his friends and leading citizens. 27 Therefore I was encouraged by the help of the master my god, and gathered together out of Yisrael (Israel) men to go up with me.

The families travelling with Ezra

28 These are the chief according to their families and their several divisions, who went up with me from Bavel (Babylon) in King Artahshashta's (Artaxerxes') reign: 29 of the sons of Pinhas, Gereshom; of the sons of Itamar, Daniyel; of the sons of David,[124] Hatush[125] the son of Shekanyah; 30 of the sons of Par'osh, Zekaryah (Zechariah); and with him were counted one hundred and fifty men; 31 of the sons of Pahat-Moav, Elyehoeynay the son of[126] Zerahyah, and with him two hundred men; 32 of[127] the sons of Zatu, Shekanyah the son of Yahaziel, and with him three hundred men; of the sons of Adin, Ovadyah (Obadiah) the son of Yonatan (Jonathan), and with him two hundred and fifty men; 33 of the sons of Eylam, Yeshaeyah son of Atalyah (Athaliah), and with him seventy men; 34 of the sons of Shefatyah, Zevadyah son of Mika'el (Michael), and with him seventy men; 35 of the sons of Yoav (Joab), Ovadyah son of Yehiel. Yehiel, and with him two hundred and twelve men; 36 of the sons of Bani, Shelomit son of Yosifyah,[128] and with him one hundred and sixty men; 37 of the sons of Bevay, Zekaryah son of Bevay, and with him twenty-eight men; 38 of the sons of Azgad: Azgad, Yohan (John) son of Hakatan Hakatan, and with him one hundred and ten men; 39 of the sons of Adonikam, the last, and these are the names of them, Elifelet, Ye'uel, and Shemayah, and with them seventy men; 40 of the sons of Bigvay, Utay the son of Zabud, and with him seventy men.

Ezra prepares the group for the journey

41 I gathered them together to the river called Ahava. There we pitched our tents three days, and I inspected them. 42 When I'd found there none of the priests and Levites, 43 then sent I to Eleazar, Ariel, Shemayah, 44 Elnatan, Shemayah, Yoyariv, Natan (Nathan), Elnatan, Zekaryah, and Meshulam, principal men and men of understanding. 45 I asked them to go to Ido the captain, who was in the place of the treasury, 46 and commanded them that they should speak to Ido, to his kindred, and to the treasurers in that place, to send us such men as might execute the priests' office in our master's house. 47 By the mighty hand of our master, they brought to us men of understanding of the sons of[129] Mahli the son of Levi, the son of Yisrael (Israel),[130] Shereveyah, and his sons, and his kindred, who were eighteen, 48 and[131] Hashavyah, Annuus, and Osaias his brother, of the sons of Chanuneus, and their sons were twenty men; 49 and of the temple servants whom David and the principal men had appointed for the servants of the Levites, two hundred and twenty temple servants. The list of all their names was reported.

Prayer and preparations for a safe journey

50 There I vowed a fast for the young men before our master, to seek from him a prosperous journey both for us and for our children and livestock that were with us; 51 for I was ashamed to ask of the king infantry, cavalry, and an escort for protection against our adver-

121 **RV 8:20 · Note** a cor is about 230 litres, so 100 cors is about 23 kilolitres or 652 bushels

122 **RV 8:20 · Note** a firkin is about 41 litres or 11 gallons.

123 **RV 8:20 · Note** So some authorities. See Ezra 7:22. The common reading is, other things.

124 **RV 8:29 · Note** Hattush.

125 **RV 8:29 · Note** Ezra 8:3, of the sons of Shecaniah; of the sons of Parosh.

126 **RV 8:31 · Note** Zerehiah.

127 **RV 8:32 · Note** Ezra 8:5, of the sons of Shecaniah, the son of Jahaziel.

128 **RV 8:36 · Note** Ezra 8:10, of the sons of Shelomith, the son of Josiphiah.

129 **RV 8:47 · Note** Mahli.

130 **RV 8:47 · Note** Sherebiah.

131 **RV 8:48 · Note** Hashabiah.

Readers' Version

saries. 52 Because we'd said to the king that our master's power would be with those who seek him, to support them in all ways. 53 Again we prayed to our lord about these things, and found him to be merciful.

54 Then I set apart twelve men of the chiefs of the priests,[132] Shereveyah, Hashavyah, and ten men of their kindred with them. 55 I weighed out to them the silver, the gold, and the holy vessels of our master's house, which the king, his counsellors, the leading citizens, and all Yisrael (Israel) had given. 56 When I'd weighed it, I delivered to them six hundred and fifty talents of silver, silver vessels weighing one hundred talents, one hundred talents of gold, 57 twenty golden vessels, and twelve vessels of brass, even of fine brass, glittering like gold. 58 I said to them, "You're holy to the master, the vessels are holy, and the gold and the silver are a vow to the master, the master of our fathers. 59 Watch and keep them until you deliver them to the chiefs of the priests and Levites, and to the principal men of the families of Yisrael in Yerushalem, in the chambers of our master's house. 60 So the priests and the Levites who received the silver, the gold, and the vessels which were in Yerushalem, brought them into the master's temple.

The group arrives in Yerushalem

61 We left the river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month. We came to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) by the mighty hand of our master which was on us. The master delivered us from every enemy on the way, and so we came to Yerushalem. 62 When we'd been there three days, the silver and gold was weighed and delivered in our master's house on the fourth day to[133] Meremot the priest the son of[134] Uriyah. 63 With him was Eleazar the son of Pinhas, and with them were Yozavad the son of Yeshua (Jesus) and[135] Noadyah the son of Binuy, the Levites. All was delivered to them by number and weight. 64 All the weight of them was recorded at the same hour. 65 Moreover those who'd come out of captivity offered sacrifices to the master, the god of Yisrael, even twelve bulls for all Yisrael, ninety-six rams, 66 seventy-two lambs, and twelve goats for a peace offering—all of them a sacrifice to the master. 67 They delivered the king's commandments to the king's stewards and to the governors of Coele-Syria and Foinikai; and they honoured the people and the master's temple.

Ezra learns about marriages to foreigners

68 Now when these things were done, the principal men came to me and said, 69 "The nation of Yisrael, the princes, the priests, and the Levites haven't put away from themselves the foreign people of the land nor the uncleannesses of the Gentiles—the Kena'anim (Canaanites), Hitim, Perizi, Yevusim, Moavim, Mitsrim (Egyptians), and Edomim. 70 Because both they and their sons have married with their daughters, and the holy seed is mixed with the foreign people of the land. From the beginning of this matter the rulers and the leading citizens have been partakers of this iniquity."

Ezra confesses the people's sins

71 And as soon as I'd heard these things, I tore my clothes and my holy garment, and plucked the hair from off my head and beard, and sat down sad and full of heaviness. 72 So all those who were moved at the word of the master, the god of Yisrael, assembled to me while I mourned for the iniquity, but I sat still full of heaviness until the evening sacrifice. 73 Then rising up from the fast with my clothes and my holy garment torn, and bowing my knees and stretching out my hands to the master, 74 I said, "Oh master, I'm ashamed and confounded before your face, 75 for our sins are multiplied above our heads, and our errors have reached up to heaven 76 ever since the time of our fathers. We're in great sin, even to this day. 77 Because our sins and our fathers' we with our kindred, our kings, and our priests were given up to the kings of the earth, to the sword, and to captivity, and for a prey with shame, to this day. 78 Now in some measure mercy has been shown to us from you, Oh master, that there should be left us a root and a name in the place of your sanctuary, 79 and to uncover a light in the house of the master our god, and to give us food in the time of our servitude. 80 Yes, when we were in bondage, we weren't forsaken by our master, but he gave us favour before Paras' (Persia's) kings, so that they gave us food, 81 glorified our master's temple, and raised up the desolate Tsiyon (Zion), to give us a sure dwelling in Yehudah (Judea) and Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

82 "Now, Oh master, what can we say, having these things? Because we've transgressed your commandments which you gave by the hand of your servants the prophets, saying, 83 'The land, which you enter into to possess as an inheritance, is a land polluted with the pollutions of the foreigners of the land, and they've filled it with their uncleanness. 84 Therefore now you mustn't marry your daughters to their sons, and you mustn't take their daughters for your sons. 85 You must never seek to have peace with them, that you may be strong, and eat the good things of the land, and that you may leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.' 86 All that's happened is done to us for our wicked works and great sins, for you, Oh master, made our sins light, 87 and gave to us such a root; but we've turned back again to transgress your law in mingling ourselves with the uncleanness of the heathen of the land. 88 You weren't angry with us to destroy us until you'd left us neither root, seed, nor name. 89 Oh master of Yisrael (Israel), you're true, for we're left a root this day. 90 Listen, now we're before you in our iniquities, for we can't stand any longer before you because of these things."

132 **RV 8:54 · Note** Sherebiah, Hashabiah.

133 **RV 8:62 · Note** Meremoth.

134 **RV 8:62 · Note** Uriah.

135 **RV 8:63 · Note** Noadiah the son of Binnui.

Readers' Version

The people agree to act

91 As Ezra in his prayer made his confession, weeping, and lying flat on the ground before the temple, a very great throng of men, women, and children gathered to him from Yerushalem (Jerusalem); for there was great weeping among the multitude.[136] 92 Then Yekonias the son of Yehiel, one of the sons of Yisrael, called out, and said, "Oh Ezra, we've sinned against the master God, we've married foreign women of the heathen of the land, but there's still hope for Yisrael. 93 Let's make an oath to the master about this, that we'll put away all our foreign wives with their children, 94 as seems good to you, and to as many as obey the master's Law. 95 Arise, and take action, for this is your task, and we'll be with you to do valiantly." 96 So Ezra arose, and took an oath from the chief of the priests and Levites of all Yisrael to do these things; and they swore to it.

The people deal with marriages to foreigners

9:1 Then Ezra rose up from the temple courtyard and went to the chamber of Yonah (Jonah) the son of Elyashiv,[137] 2 and lodged there, and ate no bread and drank no water, mourning for the great iniquities of the multitude. 3 An official announcement was made in all Yehudah and Yerushalem to all those who returned from captivity, that they should be gathered together at Yerushalem, 4 and that anyone who didn't meet there within two or three days, in accordance with the ruling of the elders, that their livestock would be seized for the use of the temple, and they'd be expelled from the multitude of those who returned from captivity.

5 Within three days, all those of the tribe of Yehudah (Judah) and Benyamin gathered together at Yerushalem (Jerusalem). This was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. 6 All the multitude sat together shivering in the broad place before the temple because of the present foul weather. 7 So Ezra arose up and said to them, "You've transgressed the law and married foreign wives, increasing the sins of Yisrael (Israel). 8 Now make confession and give glory to the master, the god of our fathers, 9 and do his will, and separate yourselves from the heathen of the land, and from the foreign women."

10 Then the whole multitude cried out, and said with a loud voice, "Just as you've spoken, so we'll do. 11 But because the multitude is great, and it's foul weather, so that we can't stand outside, and this isn't a work of one day or two, seeing our sin in these things has spread far, 12 therefore let the rulers of the multitude stay, and let all those of our settlements that have foreign wives come at the time appointed, 13 and with them the rulers and judges of every place, until we turn away the master's anger from us for this matter."

14 So Yonatan (Jonathan) the son of Asahel and Yahzeyah[138] the son of Tikvah took the matter on themselves. Meshulam and Levi and Shabtay were judges with them. 15 Those who returned from captivity did according to all these things.

16 Ezra the priest chose for himself principal men of their families, all by name. On the new moon of the tenth month they met together to examine the matter. 17 So their cases of men who had foreign wives was brought to an end by the new moon of the first month.

Those who had married foreign women

18 Of the priests who'd come together and had foreign wives, there were found 19 of the sons of Yeshua (Jesus) the son of Yotsadak, and his kindred, Ma'aseyah,[139] Eleazar, and Yariv,[140] and Gedalyah.[141] 20 They gave their hands to put away their wives, and to offer rams to make reconciliation for their error. 21 Of the sons of Imer: Hananyah, Zevadyah, Harim,[142] Ma'aseyah,[143] Yehiel,[144] and Uziyah.[145] 22 Of the sons of Pashhur:[146] Elyehoeynay, Ma'aseyah, Yishmael (Ishmael), Netanel, Yozavad,[147] and Eleasah.[148]

23 Of the Levites: Yozavad, Shimei, Kelayah[149] who was called Kelita,[150] Petahyah,[151] Yehudah (Judas), and Yonah (Jonah). 24 Of the holy singers: Elyashiv[152] and Bakurus. 25 Of the gatekeepers: Shalum and[153] Telem.

136 **RV 8:91 · Cross-ref.** Ezr 10:1.
137 **RV 9:1 · Cross-ref.** Ezr 10:6.
138 **RV 9:14 · Note** Another reading is, Ezias.
139 **RV 9:19 · Note** Maaseiah.
140 **RV 9:19 · Note** Jarib.
141 **RV 9:19 · Note** Gedaliah
142 **RV 9:21 · Note** Harim
143 **RV 9:21 · Note** Maaseiah.
144 **RV 9:21 · Note** Jehiel.
145 **RV 9:21 · Note** Uzziah.
146 **RV 9:22 · Note** Pashhur.
147 **RV 9:22 · Note** Jozabad.
148 **RV 9:22 · Note** Elasah.
149 **RV 9:23 · Note** Kelaiah.
150 **RV 9:23 · Note** Kelita.
151 **RV 9:23 · Note** Pethahiah.
152 **RV 9:24 · Note** Eliashib.
153 **RV 9:25 · Note** Telem.

Readers' Version

26 Of Yisrael (Israel), of the sons of Par'osh:[154]
Rameyah,[155] Yiziyah,[156] Malkiyah, Miyamin,[157] Eleazar, Asibas, and Benayah.[158] 27 Of the sons of Elah: Matanyah,
Zekaryah (Zechariah), Yehiel,[159] Ovadyah (Obadiah), Yerimot, and[160] Avdi. 28 Of the sons of Zatu:[161] Elyehoeynay,[162]
Elyashiv,[163] Matanyah,[164] Yerimot, Zavad,[165] and[166] Aziza.
29 Of the sons of Bevay: Yohan (John), Hananyah, Zabay,[167]
and Atlay.[168] 30 Of the sons of Bani:[169] Meshulam,[170]
Maluk,[171] Adayah,[172] Yashuv, Sheal,[173] and Yerimot. 31 Of
the sons of Addi: Naathus, Moossias, Laccunus, Naidus,
Matanyah, Sheal, Balnuus, and Menasheh (Manasseh).
32 Of the sons of Hanan: Elyehoeynay, Aseas, Malkiyah,
Sabbeus, and Shim'on (Simon) Chosameus. 33 Of the sons
of Hashum: Matenay,[174] Matityah (Mattathias),[175] Zavad,[176]
Elifelet, Menasheh, and Shimei. 34 Of the sons of Bani: Yirmiyah (Jeremiah), Momdis, Ismaerus, Yoel (Joel), Amram,
Pedias, Anos, Carabasion, Enasibus, Mamnitamenus, Eliasis, Bannus, Eliali, Someis, Shelemyah, and Netanyah. Of
the sons of Ezora: Sesis, Ezril, Azarel, Samatus, Zimri, and
Yosef (Joseph). 35 Of the sons of Nooma: Mazitias, Zavad,
Edos, Yoel, and Benayah. 36 All these had taken foreign
wives, and they put them away with their children.

Ezra reads God's law to the people

37 The priests and Levites, and
those who were of Yisrael (Israel),
lived in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and in the country, on the
new moon of the seventh month, and the Israeli people in
their settlements.
38 The whole multitude gathered together with one accord into the broad place before the porch of the temple
towards the east.[177] 39 They said to Ezra the priest and
reader, "Bring Mosheh's (Moses') law that was given by the
master, the god of Yisrael."
40 So Ezra the chief priest brought the law to the whole
multitude both of men and women, and to all the priests,
to hear the law on the new moon of the seventh month.
41 He read in the broad place before the porch of the temple from morning until midday, before both men and
women; and all the multitude gave attention to the law.
42 Ezra the priest and reader of the law stood up on the
wooden pulpit which had been prepared. 43 Beside him
stood Matityah (Mattathias), Shema, Hananyah, Azaryah,
Uriyah, Hilkiyah,[178] and Baalsamus on the right hand,
44 and on his left hand, Pedayah,[179] Mishael, Malkiyah,
Hashum,[180] Nabarias, and Zekaryah (Zechariah). 45 Then
Ezra took the book of the law before the multitude, and sat
honourably in the first place before all. 46 When he opened
the law, they all stood straight up. So Ezra blessed the master God Most High, the god of armies, the Almighty. 47 All
the people answered, "Amen." Lifting up their hands, they
fell to the ground and worshipped the master. 48 Also
Yeshua (Jesus), Annus, Shereveyah, Yamin, Akuv, Shabtay,
Hodiyah,[181] Maiannas, Kelita, Azaryah, Yozavad, Hananyah,
and Pelayah, the Levites, taught the master's law, and[182]
read to the multitude the master's law, explaining what

154 **RV 9:26 · Note** Parosh.
155 **RV 9:26 · Note** Ramiah
156 **RV 9:26 · Note** Izziah. Another reading is, Iezias
157 **RV 9:26 · Note** Mijamin.
158 **RV 9:26 · Note** Malchijah.
159 **RV 9:27 · Note** Jehiel.
160 **RV 9:27 · Note** Abdi.
161 **RV 9:28 · Note** Zattu.
162 **RV 9:28 · Note** Elioenai.
163 **RV 9:28 · Note** Eliashib.
164 **RV 9:28 · Note** Mattaniah.
165 **RV 9:28 · Note** Zabad.
166 **RV 9:28 · Note** Aziza.
167 **RV 9:29 · Note** Zabbai.
168 **RV 9:29 · Note** Athlai.
169 **RV 9:30 · Note** Bani.
170 **RV 9:30 · Note** Meshullam.
171 **RV 9:30 · Note** Malluch.
172 **RV 9:30 · Note** Adaiah.
173 **RV 9:30 · Note** Sheal.
174 **RV 9:33 · Note** Mattenai.
175 **RV 9:33 · Note** Mattattah.
176 **RV 9:33 · Note** Zabad.
177 **RV 9:38 · Cross-ref.** Neh 8:1.
178 **RV 9:43 · Note** Hilkiah.
179 **RV 9:44 · Note** Pedaiah.
180 **RV 9:44 · Note** Hashuin.
181 **RV 9:48 · Note** Hodiah.
182 **RV 9:48 · Note** Some authorities omit and read...master.

Readers' Version

was read.

49 Then Attharates said to Ezra the chief priest and reader, and to the Levites who taught the multitude, even to all, **50** "This day is holy to the master—now they all wept when they heard the law— **51** go then, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those who have nothing; **52** for the day is holy to the master. Don't be sorrowful, for the master will bring you to honour." **53** So the Levites commanded all things to the people, saying, "This day is holy. Don't be sorrowful." **54** Then they went their way, every one to eat, drink, enjoy themselves, to give portions to those who had nothing, and to rejoice greatly, **55** because they understood[183] the words they were instructed with, and for which they'd been assembled.

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183 **RV 9:55 · Note** Or, were inspired by