
עזרא ¶ EZRA

The books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* form one book in the Hebrew Scriptures. This work, the first verses of which appear also at the end of Chronicles, was written to tell how some returned from captivity and laboured at restoring religion at a rebuilt Temple in a refortified Jerusalem. During the Exile, religious interest had concentrated particularly on the laws associated with the name of Moses and had fostered the exclusiveness that became so characteristic of Judaism. Thus, the returned exiles were concerned not only with reconstruction of altar, temple, and city, but with social and religious problems, freeing the community of foreign elements and establishing religious practice in stricter conformity to their understanding of Mosaic Law. To the author, the returned exiles were a godly remnant with a religious mission.

There seem to have been four stages of the return: (1) a return under Cyrus (*circa* 538 BCE) led by Sheshbazzar, who commenced rebuilding the Temple but, under local opposition, had to leave it unfinished; (2) a return under Darius I (521–485 BCE) led by Zerubbabel and Jeshua, who also encountered opposition but, with encouragement from the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, completed the Temple; (3) a group, under Artaxerxes I (464–423 BCE), led by Ezra, who brought a codification of Mosaic Law; (4) another group, under Artaxerxes II (404–358 BCE), led by Nehemiah, who came twice under Artaxerxes I to build the walls of Jerusalem, still against opposition from the local groups, and to attempt to establish purity of community and worship. An alternate solution of difficult textual problems places Ezra's return under Artaxerxes II, after Nehemiah.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

Superficially, the work is a continuation of the Chronicler's work but its *original* date is earlier than that of Chronicles and, most importantly, it uses and quotes documents that are contemporary with the events recounted. However, it seems almost certain that the Chronicler heavily edited this history, when compiling his 'own' work, and this is particularly evident in parts of what is now the Book of Ezra, which have been rewritten in the perspective of a 'third person' observer.

The text has been dislocated in transmission; it is probable that Ne 8 originally stood between Ezr 8 and 9, and that Ne 9:1–5 originally stood between Ezr 10:15 and 10:16. An editor, faced with this textual confusion, endeavoured to ease it by supplying connecting sentences and by insertions, such as the name of Nehemiah in Ne 8:9 and of Ezra in Ne 12:26 and 36.

EZRA 1

רות פרק א

א * וּבִשְׁנַת אֶחָת לְכוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס לְכָלוֹת דְּבַר-
יְהוָה מִפִּי יִרְמְיָה הַעֵיר יְהוָה אֶת-רוּחַ פָּרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ-
פָּרַס וַיַּעֲבֵר-קוֹל בְּכָל-מַלְכוּתוֹ וְגַם-בְּמִכְתָּב
לְאֹמֵר:

ב כֹּה אָמַר פָּרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס כָּל מַמְלָכוֹת
הָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהוּא פָקַד
עָלַי לְבַנּוֹת-לּוֹ בַּיִת בִּירוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה:
ג מִי-בְכֶם מִכָּל-עַמּוֹ יְהִי אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ וְלַעַל
לִירוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה וַיֵּבֶן אֶת-בַּיִת יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:
ד וְכָל-הַנִּשְׂאָר מִכָּל-הַמְּקוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר הוּא גָר-
שָׁם יִנְשְׂאוּהוּ אֲנָשֵׁי מְקוֹמוֹ בְּכֶסֶף וּבַזָּהָב
וּבְרִכּוּשׁ וּבְבַהֲמָה עַם-הַנְּדָבָה לְבַיִת
הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

¹ In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of Yahweh spoken through Jeremiah, Yahweh roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom:

² “Cyrus king of Persia says this, “Yahweh, the God of Heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. ³ Whoever among you who belongs to the full tally of his people – may his God be with him – is now allowed to go up to Jerusalem, in Judah, and build the Temple of Yahweh, God of Israel, who is the God in Jerusalem; ⁴ and let each survivor, wherever he lives, be assisted by the people of his locality with silver, gold, equipment and riding beasts, as well as voluntary offerings for the Temple of God, which is in Jerusalem.””

EZRA 1

- ¹ The conquest of Babylon by Cyrus dates from the autumn of 539 BCE; the first year of his reign (over the Babylonian empire) begins in Nisan (March–April) 538 BCE. The ‘seventy years’ of captivity foretold by Jeremiah (Jr 29:10) is a round number, though it could be understood literally by making the subjection of Judah begin with the reign of Jehoiakim (609 BCE), see 2K 24:1.
- ² The Persian kings were, as a whole, extremely generous to the temples of conquered peoples, restoring and actively supporting them, while keeping a measure of control.
- ³ The expression, ‘*the full tally of his people*’, apparently includes no exiles from the Northern Kingdom but see v. 5.
- ⁴ The ‘*survivors*’, 9:8, 13–15, Ne 1:2, constitute the remnant spared by God and identified, after Ezr 6:8–10, with the Babylonian exiles (see #Is 4:3). The edict takes the form here of a proclamation in Hebrew, by public heralds to the exiled Jews and no doubt drawn up by Jews employed in the Persian chancellery. 6:3–5, on the other hand, is a memorandum for the use of Persian officials.

^ה וַיָּקוּמוּ רֵאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת לַיהוּדָה וּבְנֵימָן וְהַכֹּהֲנִים
וְהַלְוִיִּם לְכָל הָעִיר הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־רוּחֹו לְעֲלוֹת
לְבַנּוֹת אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם: וְכָל־
סְבִיבְתֵיהֶם חִזְקוּ בִידֵיהֶם בְּכָל־כֶּסֶף בְּזָהָב
בְּרָכוּשׁ וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבַמְגִדָּנוֹת לְבַד עַל־כָּל־
הַתְּנָדָב: {ס} וְהַמֶּלֶךְ פֹּרֵשׁ הוֹצִיא אֶת־כָּלֵי בַיִת־
יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיא נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר מִירוּשָׁלַם וַיִּתְּנֵם
בְּבַיִת אֱלֹהָיו: ^ח וַיּוֹצִיאֵם פֹּרֵשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס עַל־יַד־
מִתְרַדָּת הַגְּזַבְרַ וַיִּסְפְּרֵם לְשֵׁשׁבַצָר הַנָּשִׂיא
לַיהוּדָה: {ס} ^ט וְאֵלֶּה מִסְפְּרֵם אֲגָרְטָלֵי זָהָב
שְׁלֹשִׁים אֲגָרְטָלֵי־כֶסֶף אֶלֶף מַחְלָפִים תִּשְׁעָה
וְעֶשְׂרִים: {ס} ^י כְּפוֹרֵי זָהָב שְׁלֹשִׁים כְּפוֹרֵי כֶסֶף
מִשְׁנָיִם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת וְעֶשְׂרָה כָּלִים אַחֲרֵים אֶלֶף:
{ס} ^{יא} כָּל־כָּלִים לְזָהָב וּלְכֶסֶף חֲמִשָּׁת אֲלָפִים
וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת הַכֹּל הָעֵלָה שֵׁשׁבַצָר עִם הָעֲלוֹת
הַגּוֹלָה מִבָּבֶל לִירוּשָׁלַם: {פ}

⁵ Then the heads of families of Judah and of Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, in fact all those whose spirit had been roused by God, prepared to go and rebuild the Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem; ⁶ and all their neighbours gave them help with silver articles, and gold, and equipment, and riding beasts, and valuable presents, in addition to their voluntary offerings. ⁷ Also, King Cyrus handed over the articles belonging to the Temple of Yahweh that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and put in the temple of his god. ⁸ Cyrus, the king of Persia, handed them over to Mithredath the treasurer, who checked them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. ⁹ The inventory was as follows: thirty gold dishes, one thousand silver dishes, twenty-nine knives, ¹⁰ thirty gold bowls, a thousand silver bowls, four hundred and ten damaged, and one thousand other articles. ¹¹ In all, five thousand four hundred articles of gold and silver. Sheshbazzar took all these with him when he led the exiles back from Babylon to Jerusalem.

⁵ The literal translation of 'families' is 'fathers'.

⁶ The NJB reads "gave them every kind of help: silver, gold ..." following 1Es 2:6; here, the text follows the MT and the NRSV.

⁷ The literal translation of 'put in' is 'gave them to'.

⁸ 'Mithredath' (מִתְרַדָּת) is a Persian name meaning 'gift of Mithras'. 'Sheshbazzar' (שֵׁשׁבַצָר) was the leader of the first party of returning exiles.

⁹ The NJB, following the LXX, has 'repaired' in place of 'knives', here following the NRSV & NJPS.; the noun מַחְלָפִים is found only here in the OT and what it refers to here is unclear; the Vg has 'knives', (*cultri*).

¹⁰ The meaning of the term מִשְׁנָיִם ('damaged', here following the NJB) is uncertain; the noun מִשְׁנָה means 'double' or 'second'.

¹¹ The total number as given in the MT does not match the numbers given for the various items in v. 9.

EZRA 2

רות פרק ב

- א וְאֵלֶּה | בְּנֵי הַמְּדִינָה הָעֵלִים מִשְׁבֵּי הַגּוֹלָה אֲשֶׁר
 הִגְלָה נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר מֶלֶךְ-בָּבֶל לְבָבֶל
 וַיָּשׁוּבוּ לִירוּשָׁלַם וְיְהוּדָה אִישׁ לְעִירוֹ: ב אֲשֶׁר-בָּאוּ
 עִם-זֶרְבָבֶל יֵשׁוּעַ נְחֵמְיָה שְׂרָיָה רֵעֵלְיָה מְרַדְכַּי
 בְּלָשָׁן מִסְפָּר בְּגוּי רְחוּם בְּעֵנָה מִסְפָּר אַנְשֵׁי עַם
 יִשְׂרָאֵל: {ס}
- ג בְּנֵי פֶרְעֵשׁ אֲלָפִים מֵאָה שִׁבְעִים וּשְׁנַיִם: {ס} 1 These were the people of the province who came from the captivity of
 the Exile, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had deported to
 Babylon; they returned to Jerusalem and to Judah, each to his own town.
 ד בְּנֵי שִׁפְטִיָּה שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שִׁבְעִים וּשְׁנַיִם: {ס} 2 They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah,
 Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum and Baanah. The number of
 ה בְּנֵי אֲרָח שִׁבְעַת מֵאוֹת חֲמִשָּׁה וּשְׁבַעִים: {ס} 3 The sons of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two.
 ו בְּנֵי-פַחַת מוֹאָב לְבְנֵי יֵשׁוּעַ יוֹאָב אֲלָפִים שְׁמֹנֶה
 מֵאוֹת וּשְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר: {ס} 4 The sons of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two.
 ז בְּנֵי עֵילָם אֶלֶף מֵאָתַיִם חֲמִשִּׁים וָאַרְבַּעַה: {ס} 5 The sons of Arah, seven hundred and seventy-five.
 ח בְּנֵי זַטּוּא תִשַׁע מֵאוֹת וָאַרְבַּעִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה: {ס} 6 The sons of Pahath-Moab, that is to say the sons of Jeshua and Joah,
 two thousand eight hundred and twelve.
 7 The sons of Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four.
 8 The sons of Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five.

EZRA 2

- 1 This list is also found in Ne 7:6-73 and 1Es 5 but with variations. That of 1Es seems, in certain respects, to be the best preserved but it would be arbitrary to correct one by means of another. The *Kethib/Qere* difference here (dropping a *vav*) would benefit from an explanation.
- 2 After 'Reeliah', the NJB (following Ne 7:7) adds 'Nahamani'; here, we follow the MT, LXX & NRSV.
- 3 For 'Parosh' (פֶּרְעֵשׁ), the LXX reads Φοροσ. Throughout this list, the literal translation of 'descendants' is 'sons'.
- 4 For 'Shephatiah' (שִׁפְטִיָּה), the LXX reads Σαφατια.
- 5 For 'Arah' (אֲרָח), the LXX reads Ηρα.
- 6 For 'Pahath-Moab' (פַּחַת מוֹאָב), the LXX reads Πααθμουαβ. The MT lacks the word 'and' between 'Jeshua' and 'Joab' (יֵשׁוּעַ יוֹאָב), as does the LXX (Ιησουε Ιωαβ); here, we follow the Peshitta, NJB & NRSV.
- 7 For 'Elam' (עֵילָם), the LXX reads Αιλαμ.
- 8 For 'Zattu' (זַטּוּא), the LXX reads Ζαττουα.

- ט בְּנֵי זַכַּי שֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת וְשֵׁשִׁים: {ס} 9 The sons of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty.
- י בְּנֵי בָנִי שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת אַרְבַּעִים וְשָׁנַיִם: {ס} 10 The sons of Bani, six hundred and forty-two.
- יא בְּנֵי בְבַי שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשָׁה: {ס} 11 The sons of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three.
- יב בְּנֵי עֲזָגָד אֶלֶף מֵאֹתַיִם עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁנַיִם: {ס} 12 The sons of Azgad, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two.
- יג בְּנֵי אֲדוֹנִיקָם שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת שְׁשִׁים וְשֵׁשֶׁה: {ס} 13 The sons of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six.
- יד בְּנֵי בִּגְוַי אַלְפִים חֲמִשִּׁים וְשֵׁשָׁה: {ס} 14 The sons of Bigvai, two thousand and fifty-six.
- טו בְּנֵי עֲדִין אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת חֲמִשִּׁים וְאַרְבָּעָה: {ס} 15 The sons of Adin, four hundred and fifty-four.
- טז בְּנֵי אֶטֶר לִיחֻזְקִיָּה תִשְׁעִים וְשָׁמְנָה: {ס} 16 The sons of Ater, that is to say of Hezekiah, ninety-eight.
- יז בְּנֵי בְצַי שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשָׁה: {ס} 17 The sons of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three.
- יח בְּנֵי יוֹרָה מֵאָה וְשָׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר: {ס} 18 The sons of Jorah, one hundred and twelve.
- יט בְּנֵי חָשׁוּם חָשׁוּם מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשָׁה: {ס} 19 The sons of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three.
- כ בְּנֵי גִבְבָר תִּשְׁעִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה: {ס} 20 The sons of Gibbar, ninety-five.
- כא בְּנֵי בֵית-לַחֶם מֵאָה עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשָׁה: {ס} 21 The sons of Bethlehem, one hundred and twenty-three.

⁹ The LXX rendering of 'Zaccai' (זַכַּי) is Ζακχαου.

¹⁰ The LXX rendering of 'Bani' (בְּנֵי) is Βανουι.

¹¹ The LXX rendering of 'Bebai' (בְּבַי) is Βαβι.

¹² The LXX rendering of 'Azgad' (עֲזָגָד) is Ασγαδ.

¹³ The LXX rendering of 'Adonikam' (אֲדוֹנִיקָם) is Αδωνικαμ.

¹⁴ The LXX rendering of 'Bigvai' (בִּגְוַי) is Βαγοι.

¹⁵ The LXX rendering of 'Adin' (עֲדִין) is Αδιν.

¹⁶ The LXX rendering of 'Ater' (אֶטֶר) is Ατηρ.

¹⁷ The LXX rendering of 'Bezai' (בְּצַי) is Βασου.

¹⁸ The LXX rendering of 'Jorah' (יֹרָה) is Ιωρα.

¹⁹ The LXX rendering of 'Hashum' (חָשׁוּם) is Ασμε.

²⁰ The LXX rendering of 'Gibbar' (גִּבְבָר) is Γαββαρ.

²¹ For 'Bethlehem' (בֵּית-לַחֶם), the LXX reads Βαιθλεεμ.

- כב אֲנָשֵׁי נֶטְפָה חֲמִשִּׁים וְשֵׁשׁ: 22 The men of Netophah, fifty-six.
- כג אֲנָשֵׁי עֲנָתוֹת מֵאָה עֶשְׂרִים וְשִׁמְנָה: {ס} 23 The men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight;
- כד בְּנֵי עֲזֻמֹּת אַרְבַּעִים וּשְׁנָיִם: {ס} 24 The sons of Azmaveth, forty-two.
- כה בְּנֵי קִרְיַת עָרִים כְּפִירָה וּבְאֵרוֹת שִׁבְעַת מְאוֹת
וְאַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס} 25 The sons of Kiriath-Jearim, and Chephirah and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three.
- כו בְּנֵי הַרְמָה וְגִבְעַת שֵׁשׁ מְאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וְאַחַד: {ס} 26 The sons of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one.
- כז אֲנָשֵׁי מִכְמָס מֵאָה עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁנָיִם: {ס} 27 The men of Michmas, one hundred and twenty-two.
- כח אֲנָשֵׁי בֵּית-אֵל וְהַעֲיִ מֵאֵתַיִם עֶשְׂרִים
וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס} 28 The men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred and twenty-three.
- כט בְּנֵי נְבוֹ חֲמִשִּׁים וּשְׁנָיִם: {ס} 29 The sons of Nebo, fifty-two.
- ל בְּנֵי מַגְבִּישׁ מֵאָה חֲמִשִּׁים וְשֵׁשׁ: {ס} 30 The sons of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six.
- לא בְּנֵי עֵילָם אַחַר אֶלֶף מֵאֵתַיִם חֲמִשִּׁים
וְאַרְבָּעָה: {ס} 31 The sons of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four.
- לב בְּנֵי חָרִם שְׁלֹשׁ מְאוֹת וְעֶשְׂרִים: {ס} 32 The sons of Harim, three hundred and twenty.

22 For 'Netophah' (נֶטְפָה), the LXX reads *Νετωφα*.

23 For 'Anathoth' (עֲנָתוֹת), the LXX reads *Αναθωθ*.

24 For 'Azmaveth' (עֲזֻמֹּת), the LXX reads *Ασμωνθ*.

25 In place of 'Kiriath-Jearim', here following the NJB & NETB, the MT has 'Kiriath-Earim' (קִרְיַת עָרִים); the LXX rendering is *Καριαθιαριμ*. For 'Chephirah' (כְּפִירָה) and 'Beeroth' (בְּאֵרוֹת), the LXX reads, respectively, *Καφιρα* & *Βηρωθ*.

26 For 'Ramah' (רָמָה) and 'Geba' (גִּבְעַת), the LXX reads, respectively, *Αραμα* & *Γαβαα*.

27 The LXX rendering of 'Michmas' (מִכְמָס) is *Μαχμας*.

28 The LXX rendering of 'Bethel' (בֵּית-אֵל) is *Βαιθηλ*, and that for 'Ai' (הַעֲיִ) is *Αια*.

29 The LXX rendering of 'Nebo' (נְבוֹ) is *Ναβου*.

30 The LXX rendering of 'Magbish' (מַגְבִּישׁ) is *Μαγεβως*.

31 The LXX rendering of 'Elam' (עֵילָם) is *Ηλαμ*.

32 The LXX rendering of 'Harim' (חָרִם) is *Ηραμ*.

- לג בני־לוד וְאֹנּוֹ וְחַדִּיד שִׁבְעַת מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וְחַמְשָׁה: {ס} 33 The sons of Lod and Hadid and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five.
- לד בני יֶרִיחוֹ שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אַרְבַּעִים וְחַמְשָׁה: {ס} 34 The sons of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five.
- לה בני סֵנְאָה שְׁלֹשָׁת אֲלָפִים וְשָׁשׁ מֵאוֹת וּשְׁלֹשִׁים: {ס} 35 The sons of Senaah, three thousand six hundred and thirty.
- לו הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי יְדַעְיָה לְבֵית יֵשׁוּעַ תְּשַׁע מֵאוֹת שִׁבְעִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס} 36 The priests: descendants of Jedaiah, of the House of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three.
- לז בְּנֵי אִמֶּר אֶלֶף חֲמִשִּׁים וּשְׁנַיִם: {ס} 37 The sons of Immer, one thousand and fifty-two.
- לח בְּנֵי פַשְׁחֹר אֶלֶף מֵאוֹת אַרְבַּעִים וְשִׁבְעָה: {ס} 38 The sons of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven;
- לט בְּנֵי חָרִים אֶלֶף וְשִׁבְעָה עֶשְׂרִים: {ס} 39 The sons of Harim, one thousand and seventeen.
- מ הַלְוִיִּם בְּנֵי־יֵשׁוּעַ וְקַדְמִיאֵל לְבְנֵי הוֹדַוְיָה שִׁבְעִים וָאַרְבָּעָה: {ס} 40 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the line of Hodaviah, seventy-four.
- מא הַמְשֻׁרְרִים בְּנֵי אֶסָף מֵאָה עֶשְׂרִים וְשְׁמֹנֶה: {פ} 41 The singers: the sons of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight.

33 For 'Lod' (לוד), 'Hadid' (חדיד) & 'Ono' (אונו), the LXX reads Λοδ, Αρωδ & Ονω, respectively.

34 The LXX rendering of 'Jericho' (יריחו) is Ιεριχω.

35 The LXX rendering of 'Senaah' (סנאה) is Σαναα.

36 This paragraph lists only four priestly groups, as against the twenty-four in 1Ch 24. For 'Jedaiah' (ידעיה), the LXX reads Ιεδουα.

37 For 'Immer' (אמר), the LXX reads Εμμηρ.

38 For 'Pashhur' (פשחור), the LXX reads Φασσουρ.

39 For 'Harim' (חרים), the LXX reads Ηρεμ.

40 For 'Jeshua' (ישוע), 'Kadmiel' (קדמיאל) & 'Hodaviah' (הודויה), the LXX reads Ίησοϋ, Καδμηηλ & Οδουια, respectively.

41 Here, the 'singers' are not reckoned among the Levites, unlike 3:10. One group only is mentioned, unlike 1Ch 6:16ff. The LXX rendering of 'Asaph' (אסף) is Ασαφ.

- מב בְּנֵי הַשְּׁעָרִים בְּנֵי־שְׁלוֹם בְּנֵי־אֶטֶר בְּנֵי־טַלְמוֹן
בְּנֵי־עֲקוּב בְּנֵי חֲטִיטָא בְּנֵי שְׁבַי הַכֹּל מֵאָה שְׁלֹשִׁים
וּתְשָׁעָה: {פ}
- 42 The sons of the gatekeepers: descendants of Shallum, descendants of
Ater, descendants of Talmon, descendants of Akkub, sons of Hatita,
descendants of Shobai: in all, one hundred and thirty-nine.
- מג הַנְּתִינִים {ס} 43 The temple slaves:
בְּנֵי־צִיחָא {ס} the sons of Ziha,
בְּנֵי־חַשׁוּפָא {ס} the sons of Hasupha,
בְּנֵי {ר} טַבְּעוֹת: {ס} the sons of Tabbaoth.
- מד בְּנֵי־קֶרֶס {ס} 44 The sons of Keroth,
בְּנֵי־סִיעָהָא {ס} the sons of Siaha,
בְּנֵי {ר} פְּדוֹן: {ס} the sons of Padon.
- מה בְּנֵי־לְבָנָה {ס} 45 The sons of Lebanah,
בְּנֵי־חַגְבָּה {ס} the sons of Hagabah,
בְּנֵי {ר} עֲקוּב: {ס} the sons of Akkub.
- מו בְּנֵי־חַגָּב {ס} 46 The sons of Hagab,
בְּנֵי־שַׁלְמַי שְׁמַלִי {ס} the sons of Shalmal,
בְּנֵי {ר} חַנָּן: {ס} the sons of Hanan.

42 For 'Shallum' (שְׁלוֹם), 'Ater' (אֶטֶר), 'Talmon' (טַלְמוֹן), 'Akkub' (עֲקוּב), 'Hatita' (חֲטִיטָא) & 'Shobai' (שְׁבַי), the LXX reads, respectively, Σαλουμ, Ατηρ, Τελμων, Ακουβ, Ατιτα & Σαβαου.

43 The origin of the 'temple slaves' (נְתִינִים, literally, 'dedicated ones') is described in Jos 9:27. For 'Ziha' (צִיחָא), 'Hasupha' (חַשׁוּפָא), & 'Tabbaoth' (טַבְּעוֹת), the LXX reads, respectively, Σουια, Ασουφε & Ταβαωθ.

44 For 'Keroth' (קֶרֶס), 'Siaha' (סִיעָהָא), & 'Padon' (פְּדוֹן), the LXX reads, respectively, Κηραος, Σωηα & Φαδων.

45 For 'Lebanah' (לְבָנָה), 'Hagabah' (חַגְבָּה), & 'Akkub' (עֲקוּב), the LXX reads, respectively, Λαβανω, Αγαβα & Ακαβωθ.

46 For 'Hagab' (חַגָּב), 'Shalmal' (שְׁמַלִי - following the Qere, where the Ketiv and NJB have שְׁמַלִי/'Shamlai'), & 'Hanan' (חַנָּן), the LXX reads, respectively, Αγαβ, Σαμαλαι & Αναν.

מז	בְּנֵי־גִדֵּל {ס}	47	The sons of Giddel,
	בְּנֵי־גַחַר {ס}		the sons of Gahar,
	בְּנֵי {ר} רְאִיָּה: {ס}		the sons of Reaiah.
מח	בְּנֵי־רִצִּין {ס}	48	The sons of Rezin,
	בְּנֵי־נְקוּדָא {ס}		the sons of Nekoda,
	בְּנֵי {ר} גַּזָּם: {ס}		the sons of Gazzam.
מט	בְּנֵי־עֲזָא {ס}	49	The sons of Uzza,
	בְּנֵי־פָסַח {ס}		the sons of Paseah,
	בְּנֵי {ר} בְּסֵי: {ס}		the sons of Besai.
נ	בְּנֵי־אֲסָנָה {ס}	50	The sons of Asnah,
	בְּנֵי־מְעוּנִים {ס}		the sons of the Meunites,
	בְּנֵי {ר} נְפִיסִים נְפוּסִים: {ס}		the sons of the Nephisites.
נא	בְּנֵי־בַקְבּוּק {ס}	51	The sons of Bakbuk,
	בְּנֵי־חַקוּפָא {ס}		the sons of Hakupha,
	בְּנֵי {ר} חַרְחוּר: {ס}		the sons of Harhur.
נב	בְּנֵי־בַעְלֹת {ס}	52	The sons of Bazluth,
	בְּנֵי־מְחִידָא {ס}		the sons of Mehida,
	בְּנֵי {ר} חַרְשָׂא: {ס}		the sons of Harsha.

47 For 'Giddel' (גִּדְל), 'Gahar' (גַּחַר), & 'Reaiah' (רְאִיָּה), the LXX reads, respectively, *Κεδελ, Γαερ & Ρεηα*.

48 For 'Rezin' (רִצִּין), 'Nekoda' (נְקוּדָא), & 'Gazzam' (גַּזָּם), the LXX reads, respectively, *Ραρων, Νεκωδα & Γαζεμ*.

49 For 'Uzza' (עֲזָא), 'Paseah' (פָּסַח), & 'Besai' (בְּסֵי), the LXX reads, respectively, *Ουσα, Φαση & Βασι*.

50 For 'Asnah' (אֲסָנָה), 'Meunites' (מְעוּנִים), & 'Nephisites' (נְפִיסִים - as *Qere*, the *Kethib* has נְפִיסִים), the LXX reads, *Ασena, Μαωνιμ & Ναφισων*.

51 For 'Bakbuk' (בַּקְבּוּק), 'Hakupha' (חַקוּפָא), & 'Harhur' (חַרְחוּר), the LXX reads, respectively, *Βακβουκ, Ακιφα & Αρουρ*.

52 For 'Bazluth' (בַּעְלֹת), 'Mehida' (מְחִידָא), & 'Harsha' (חַרְשָׂא), the LXX reads, respectively, *Βασαλωθ, Μαουδα & Αρησα*.

נִגְ בְּנֵי־בַרְקוֹס {ס}	53 The sons of Barkos,
בְּנֵי־סִסְרָא {ס}	the sons of Sisera,
בְּנֵי־{ר} תִּמַּח: {ס}	the sons of Temah.
נִד בְּנֵי נְצִיחַ {ס}	54 The sons of Neziah,
בְּנֵי חֲטִיפָא: {ס}	the sons of Hatipha.
נִה בְּנֵי {ר} עַבְדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה {ס}	55 The sons of Solomon's slaves:
בְּנֵי־סֹטַי {ס}	the sons of Sotai,
בְּנֵי־הַסְּפֶרֶת {ס}	the sons of Hassophereth,
בְּנֵי {ר} פְּרוּדָא: {ס}	the sons of Peruda.
נִו בְּנֵי־יַעֲלָה {ס}	56 The sons of Jaalah,
בְּנֵי־דַרְקוֹן {ס}	the sons of Darkon,
בְּנֵי {ר} גִּדֵּל: {ס}	the sons of Giddel.
נִז בְּנֵי שְׁפַטְיָה	57 The sons of Shephatiah,
בְּנֵי־חַטִּיל	the sons of Hattil,
בְּנֵי {ר} פְּכֶרֶת הַצְּבָיִים {ס}	the sons of Pocereth-ha-Zebaim,
בְּנֵי אָמִי:	the sons of Ami.

⁵³ For 'Barkos' (בַּרְקוֹס), 'Sisera' (סִסְרָא), & 'Temah' (תִּמַּח), the LXX reads, respectively, *Βαρκους, Σισαρα & Θεμα*.

⁵⁴ The LXX rendering of 'Neziah' (נְצִיחַ) & 'Hatipha' (חֲטִיפָא) is *Νασουε & Ατουφα*, respectively.

⁵⁵ The 'sons of Solomon's slaves' (see Ne 11:3, 21) were the descendants of prisoners of war or of foreigners subject to forced labour. These, along with the 'temple slaves' (vv. 43–54) did the menial work of the Temple (see 8:20, Ezk 44:7–9). The LXX rendering of 'Sotai' (סֹטַי), 'Hassophereth' (הַסְּפֶרֶת) & 'Peruda' (פְּרוּדָא) is *Σατι, Ασεφραδ & Φαδουφα*, respectively.

⁵⁶ The LXX rendering of 'Jaalah' (יַעֲלָה), 'Darkon' (דַּרְקוֹן) & 'Giddel' (גִּדֵּל) is *Ιεηλα, Δαρκων & Γεδηλ*, respectively.

⁵⁷ The LXX rendering of 'Shephatiah' (שְׁפַטְיָה), 'Hattil' (חַטִּיל), 'Pocereth-ha-Zebaim' (פְּכֶרֶת הַצְּבָיִים) & 'Ami' (אָמִי) is *Σαφατια, Ατιλ, Φαχεραδ-ασεβων & Ημι*, respectively. The *Setumah* mark ({ס}) at the end of the 3rd line is shown in grey because, while it is included by *Mechon Mamre*, it is not represented in either the *MAM* text or the *UXLC*.

נח כָּל־הַנְּתִינִים וּבְנֵי עֲבָדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת תְּשַׁעִים וּשְׁנַיִם: {ס} 58 The total of the temple slaves and the sons of Solomon's slaves: three hundred and ninety-two.

נט וְאֵלֶּה הָעֹלִים מִתֵּל מֶלַח תֵּל חַרְשָׁא כְּרוּב אֲדָן אִמֶּר וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְהַגִּיד בֵּית־אֲבוֹתָם וְזִרְעָם אִם מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל הֵם: 60 בְּנֵי־דְלִיָּה בְּנֵי־טוֹבִיָּה בְּנֵי נְקוּדָא שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת חֲמֵשִׁים וּשְׁנַיִם: {ס} 59 The following, who came from Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, could not prove that their families and ancestry were of Israelite origin: 60 sons of Delaiah, sons of Tobiah, sons of Nekoda: six hundred and fifty-two.

סא וּמִבְּנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי חַבִּיָּה בְּנֵי הַקּוּז בְּנֵי בְּרוּזַי אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִבְּנוֹת בְּרוּזַי הַגִּלְעָדִי אִשָּׁה וַיִּקְרָא עָלֶיהָ שְׁמִם: 61 אֵלֶּה בִקְשׁוּ כְּתָבָם הַמְּתִיחִשִׁים וְלֹא נִמְצְאוּ וַיִּגְאָלוּ מִן־הַכֹּהֲנָה: 62 וַיֹּאמֶר הַתְּרַשְׁתָּא לָהֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵאכְלוּ מִקֹּדֶשׁ הַקֹּדְשִׁים עַד עֹמֵד כֹּהֵן לְאוּרִים וּלְתַמִּים: 63 כָּל־הַקְּהָל כְּאֶחָד אַרְבַּע רְבֹוא אֲלָפִים שְׁלֹשׁ־מֵאוֹת שָׁשִׁים: 64 מְלִבְדַּ עֲבָדֵיהֶם וְאִמְהַתֵּיהֶם אֵלֶּה שְׁבַעַת אֲלָפִים שְׁלֹשׁ 61 And, among the descendants of the priests: descendants of Habaiah, descendants of Hakkoz, descendants of Barzillai (who married one of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, whose name he adopted).

62 These looked for their entries in the official genealogies but were not to be found, and so were disqualified from the priesthood. 63 Consequently, His Excellency forbade them to eat any of the consecrated food until a priest appeared who could consult Urim and Thummim 64 The whole assembly numbered forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty,

58 For this verse, here following the NJB, NETB reads, "All the temple servants and the descendants of the servants of Solomon: 392."

59 The literal translation of 'their families and ancestries' (here following the NJB) is 'the house of their fathers'. For 'Tel-Melah' (תֵּל מֶלַח), 'Tel-Harsha' (תֵּל חַרְשָׁא), 'Cherub' (כְּרוּב), 'Addan' (אֲדָן) & 'Immer' (אִמֶּר), the LXX reads *Θελμελεθ, Θελαρησα, Χαρουβ, Ηδαν & Εμμμηρ*, respectively.

60 For 'Delaiah' (דְּלִיָּה), 'Tobiah' (טוֹבִיָּה) & 'Nekoda' (נְקוּדָא), the LXX reads *Δαλαια, Τωβια & Νεκωδα*, and adds *υἱοὶ Βουα* after 'Delaiah'.

61 For 'Habaiah' (חַבִּיָּה), 'Hakkoz' (הַקּוּז) & 'Barzillai' (בְּרוּזַי), the LXX reads, respectively, *Χαβια, Ακουσ & Βερζελλαι*.

62 This disqualification was later reversed, at least for the sons of Hakkoz (8:33, Ne 3:3, 21).

63 'His Excellency' (תְּרַשְׁתָּא) was the title of honour of the governor, a Persian word apparently meaning 'His Reverence'; the NRSV uses 'the governor'. He does not interfere in religious affairs. Ezekiel's instructions have borne fruit (see Ezk 45:7-17, 46:1-10, 12, 16-18). On the priestly privilege of eating consecrated food, see Lv 10:14-15, 22:10ff. 'Urim and Thummim' were the sacred lots used to consult God (see #1S 14:41), though no High Priest had yet been appointed who could do this (see Hg 1:1, Zc 3).

64 The total given here exceeds the numbers of the various groups; it doubtless includes others unmentioned.

מֵאֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשִׁבְעָה וְלֵהֶם מְשֻׁרְרִים וּמְשֻׁרְרוֹת
מֵאֲתָיִם: ^ס סוּסֵיהֶם שִׁבְעַת מֵאֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשֵׁשׁ
פָּרָדִיִּים מֵאֲתָיִם אַרְבַּעִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה: ^ס גַּמְלֵיהֶם
אַרְבַּע מֵאֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וַחֲמִשָּׁה חֲמֵרִים שֵׁשֶׁת
אַלְפִים שִׁבְעַת מֵאֹת וְעֶשְׂרִים: {פ}

^{סח} וּמֵרֵאשִׁי הָאֲבוֹת בְּבוֹאֵם לְבַיִת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר
בִּירוּשָׁלַם הִתְנַדְּבוּ לְבַיִת הָאֱלֹהִים לְהַעֲמִידוֹ עַל-
מְכוֹנּוֹ: ^{סט} כָּכֶחֶם נָתְנוּ לְאוֹצֵר הַמְּלֶאכֶה זֶהָב
דְּרַכְמוֹנִים שְׁשֵׁרְבָאוֹת וְאֶלֶף {ס} וְכֶסֶף מִנִּים
חֲמִשָּׁת אַלְפִים וְכִתְנֹת כְּהֵנִים מֵאָה: {ס} וַיֵּשְׁבוּ
הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וּמִן־הָעָם וְהַמְשֻׁרְרִים וְהַשּׁוֹעֲרִים
וְהַנְּתִינִים בְּעָרֵיהֶם וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָרֵיהֶם: {ס}

⁶⁵ besides their male and female slaves to the number of seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred male and female singers, ⁶⁶ and seven hundred and thirty-six horses, two hundred and forty-five mules, ⁶⁷ four hundred and thirty five camels, six thousand seven hundred and twenty donkeys.

⁶⁸ When they came to the Yahweh's Temple in Jerusalem, some heads of families made freewill offerings for the Temple of God, to erect it on its site. ⁶⁹ According to their means, they gave to the building fund sixty-one thousand gold darics, five thousand silver minas, and a hundred priestly robes. ⁷⁰ The priests, the Levites, and some of the people settled in Jerusalem and its vicinity; the singers, gatekeepers, and temple slaves in their towns; and all the other Israelites in their own towns.

⁶⁵ In place of 'besides', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB & NETB have 'not counting'.

⁶⁶ In place of 'and ... horses' and '... mules', here following NETB, the NJB has 'their horses numbered ...' and 'their mules ...'.

⁶⁷ In place of '... camels' and 'and twenty donkeys', here following NETB, the NJB has 'their camels numbered ...' and 'and their donkeys numbered twenty'.

⁶⁸ The literal translation of 'to erect' (here following the NRSV – the NJB has 'for its rebuilding') is 'to cause it to stand'.

⁶⁹ The meaning of the word דְּרַכְמוֹנִים (cf. Ne 7:69–71) is uncertain: it may be a Persian loanword, 'darics', referring to Persian gold coins (as interpreted by the NRSV) weighing ~8½g. A 'mina' was a Mesopotamian weight for precious metals, ~600g. The amounts here differ from those mentioned in Ne 7:70–72.

⁷⁰ The NJB lacks 'and its vicinity'; the MT lacks the whole clause, 'in Jerusalem and its vicinity', here following the LXX and 1Es 5:46.

רות פרק ג

EZRA 3

- א וַיָּנַע הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָרֵים {ס} וַיֵּאָסְפוּ הָעָם כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַם: {ס}
- ב וַיָּקָם יֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן־יֹזָדָק וְאַחֵיו הַכֹּהֲנִים וְזֵרֻבָבֶל בֶּן־שְׁאַלְתִּיאל וְאַחֵיו וַיְבָנוּ אֶת־מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַעֲלוֹת עָלָיו עֹלוֹת כַּכְּתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים: ג וַיְכִינוּ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עַל־מְכוֹנָתוֹ כִּי בְּאִמָּה עָלִיהֶם מַעַמֵי הָאָרְצוֹת וַיַּעַל וַיַּעֲלוּ עָלָיו עֹלוֹת לַיהוָה עֹלוֹת לְבָקָר וְלַעֲרָב: ד וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־חַג הַסִּכּוֹת כַּכְּתוּב וְעַלֹת יוֹם בְּיוֹם בְּמִסְפָּר כַּמְשָׁפֵט דְּבַר־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ: ה וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן עָלְתָ תָמִיד וְלַחֲדָשִׁים וּלְכָל־מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה הַמְקֻדָּשִׁים וּלְכָל מִתְנַדֵּב נִדְבָה
- 1 When the seventh month came and the Israelites were in their towns, the people gathered as one person in Jerusalem.
- 2 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 offerings on it as set out in the Law of Moses, man of God. 3 They erected the altar on its foundation, despite their fear of the people of the land and, on it, they gave burnt offerings to Yahweh, morning and evening; 4 they kept the Feast of Shelters as prescribed, offering daily the number of burnt offerings required for each day 5 and, also, presented the regular burnt offerings at the New Moons and all the festivals sacred to Yahweh, as well as the voluntary offerings made by

EZRA 3

- 1 The expression, 'gathered as one person' (after correction) describes the gathering organised by Ezra (Ne 7:72-8:1). The 'seventh month' would be Tishri (September-October) of 520 BCE, in the 2nd year of Darius I (Hg 2:1-4).
- 2 The mention of Zerubbabel and Jeshua as beginning the rebuilding (here and in v. 8) is editorial. The work had been officially assigned to Sheshbazzar (5:13-16, 6:3-5). The 'Law of Moses' does not here mean the Pentateuch but the body of laws associated with Moses' name, especially in Deuteronomy.
- 3 The NJB, following the LXX (ἐτοιμασίαν) and Peshitta, has 'site' in place of 'foundation', here following the MT & NRSV. The Kethib/Qere difference here warrants an explanation.
- 4 The phrase חַג הַסִּכּוֹת ('Feast of Shelters') is traditionally known as the Feast of Tabernacles; the rendering 'booths' (as NRSV, NAB, NASB) is probably better than the traditional 'tabernacles' but booths are frequently associated with trade shows and craft fairs in contemporary English. The nature of the celebration during this feast as a commemoration of the wanderings of the Israelites after they left Egypt suggests that a translation like 'shelters' (as NJB) is more appropriate.
- 5 Before 'the New Moons', the NJB, following 1Es (see 2Ch 2:3), adds 'for the Sabbaths'; here, we follow the MT & NRSV. The 'voluntary' offerings are distinct from those prescribed by the Law or obligatory as the result of a vow (see #Lv 7:11).

לִיהוָה: ^ו מִיּוֹם אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הֵחֵלוּ לְהַעֲלוֹת
עֹלוֹת לַיהוָה וְהִיבֵל יְהוָה לֹא יָסַד: ^ז וַיִּתְּנוּ-כֶסֶף
לְחַצְבִּים וְלַחֲרָשִׁים וּמֵאֲכָל וּמִשְׁתֵּה וּשְׁמֵן לְצַדִּיקִים
וּלְצָרִים לְהָבִיא עֵצֵי אֲרָזִים מִן־הַלְּבָנוֹן אֶל־יָם יָפוֹא
כְּרִשְׁיוֹן כּוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרַס עֲלֵיהֶם: {פ}

^ח וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית לְבוֹאֵם אֶל־בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים
לִירוּשָׁלַם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי הֵחֵלוּ זְרַבְבָּל בֶּן־
שָׁאֲלֻתְיָאֵל וַיִּשׁוּעַ בֶּן־יֹצָדָק וּשְׂאָר אַחֵיהֶם |
הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְכָל־הַבָּאִים מִהַשְּׁבִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
וַיַּעֲמִדוּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִבְּנֵי עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמֵעַלָּה
לְנַצַּח עַל־מְלֶאכֶת בֵּית־יְהוָה: {פ}

^ט וַיַּעֲמֵד יִשׁוּעַ בֶּנְיָו וְאַחֵיו קַדְמִיאֵל וּבְנָיו בְּנֵי־
יְהוּדָה כְּאֶחָד לְנַצַּח עַל־עֲשֵׂה הַמְּלָאכָה בְּבֵית
הָאֱלֹהִים {ס} בְּנֵי חֲנָדָד בְּנֵיהֶם וְאַחֵיהֶם הַלְוִיִּם:
^י וַיִּסְדּוּ הַבְּנִיִּים אֶת־הִיבֵל יְהוָה וַיַּעֲמִידוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים
מְלַבְּשִׁים בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת וְהַלְוִיִּם בְּנֵי־אָסָף בְּמִצְלֹתַיִם
לְהַלֵּל אֶת־יְהוָה עַל־יְדֵי דָוִד מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יא} וַיַּעֲנוּ
בְּהַלֵּל וּבְהוֹדֹת לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב כִּי־לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ עַל־

people to Yahweh. ⁶ From the first day of the seventh month, they gave burnt offerings to Yahweh, but the foundation of the Temple of Yahweh was not yet laid. ⁷ And they gave money for the masons and carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the Sidonians and Tyrians to bring cedar from Lebanon by sea to Jaffa, as king of Persia had allowed.

⁸ It was in the second month of the second year after their arrival at the Temple of God in Jerusalem that Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak, with the rest of their brothers, the priests, the Levites and all the people who had returned to Jerusalem from captivity, began the work by appointing some of the Levites who were twenty years old or more to superintend the work on the Temple of Yahweh.

⁹ And Jeshua with his sons and brothers, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Hodaviah, took charge of the workmen in God's house; and the sons of Henadad, with their sons and their brothers the Levites. ¹⁰ When the builders laid the foundation of the Temple of Yahweh, they set the priests in their robes with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise Yahweh following the directions of David king of Israel. ¹¹ They sang praise and thanks to Yahweh: "For Israel, he is

⁶ For the Chronicler, this is a resumption of the whole system of worship as prescribed in the texts of Priestly origin relating to the Law.

⁷ The literal translation of 'money' is 'silver'; minted money was known in the Persian period, though payment in kind was more common.

⁸ Hg 1:14, 2:10 & Zc 4:9 put the start of the work in the 2nd year of Darius; it actually began under Cyrus (Ezr 5:16, see 4:24).

⁹ 'Hodaviah' is conjectural, following 2:40 and 1Es 5:46; the MT has 'Judah'.

¹⁰ In place of 'robes' and 'ordinances', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'vestments' and 'directions', respectively.

¹¹ The laying of the foundation was celebrated with music and praise (compare Ps 118). For the directions of David, see 2Ch 29:25-30.

יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל־הָעָם הֲרִיעוּ תְרוּעָה גְדוֹלָה בְּהִלָּל
לַיהוָה עַל הוֹסֵד בַּיַּת־יְהוָה:

{ס}

י^ב וְרַבִּים מֵהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְרֵאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת הַזְקֵנִים
אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת הַרְאשׁוֹן בְּיַסְדּוֹ זֶה הַבַּיִת
בְּעֵינֵיהֶם בְּכִים בְּקוֹל גְּדוֹל וְרַבִּים בְּתְרוּעָה
בְּשִׂמְחָה לְהַרְרִים קוֹל: י^ג וְאִין הָעָם מִכִּירִים קוֹל
תְרוּעַת הַשִּׂמְחָה לְקוֹל בְּכִי הָעָם כִּי הָעָם מְרִיעִים
תְרוּעָה גְדוֹלָה וְהַקוֹל נִשְׁמַע עַד־לְמֶרְחֹק: {פ}

good and his faithful love is forever.” Then all the people gave a great shout of praise to Yahweh, as the foundation of the Temple of Yahweh was laid.

¹² Many of the older priests, Levites, and heads of families, who had seen the first Temple, wept very loudly when the foundations of this one were laid before their eyes, but many others shouted aloud for joy, ¹³ so that nobody could distinguish the noise of the joyful shout from the noise of the people’s weeping; for the people shouted so loudly that the noise could be heard far away.

¹² The temple had been destroyed some fifty years earlier by the Babylonians in 586 BCE.

¹³ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “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.”

רות פרק ד

EZRA 4

א וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ צָרֵי יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵימִן כִּי־בִנְיָהּ הַגּוֹלָהּ בּוֹנִים הֵיכַל לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ב וַיָּגִשׁוּ אֶל־זְרֻבָּבֶל וְאֶל־רָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהֶם נִבְנֶה עִמָּכֶם כִּי כַכֶּם נִדְרֹשׁ לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם וְלֹא וְלֹא | אֲנַחְנוּ זְבָחִים מִימֵי אֶסֶר חֲדָן מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר הַמַּעֲלָה אֲתָנוּ פָּה: ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהֶם זְרֻבָּבֶל וַיִּשׁוּעַ וּשְׂאָר רָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־לָכֶם וְלָנוּ לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת לַאֱלֹהֵינוּ כִּי אֲנַחְנוּ יְחַד נִבְנֶה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּנוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ כּוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרְס: ד וַיְהִי עַם־הָאָרֶץ מִרְפִּים יָדֵי עַם־יְהוּדָה וּמִבְלֵהִים וּמִבְהֲלִים אוֹתָם לִבְנוֹת: ה וּסְכָרִים עָלֵיהֶם יוֹעֲצִים לְהַפֵּר עֲצָתָם כְּלִימֵי כּוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרְס וְעַד־מַלְכוּת דָּרְיוֹשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרְס:

1 When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building the Temple of Yahweh, God of Israel, 2 they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of the families and said, "Let us help you build, for we resort to your God as you do and we have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here." 3 Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the other heads of Israelite families replied, "You shall have no part in building a Temple to our God. We shall build for Yahweh, God of Israel, on our own, as King Cyrus of Persia has commanded us." 4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and deterred them from building; 5 and they bribed counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose throughout the lifetime of Cyrus king of Persia right on into the reign of Darius king of Persia. 6 In the

EZRA 4

- 1 The rejoicing alerted neighbouring mixed groups, who claimed fellowship in religion (2K 17:24–28). Esarhaddon (v. 2) settled groups in the cities of Samaria in 676 BCE.
- 2 The NJB adds 'Jeshua' after 'Zerubbabel' (cf. v. 3); here, we follow the MT, LXX & NRSV. The translation here follows the Qere (| וְלֹא - '[and] to him'), LXX (καὶ αὐτῶ), Peshitta and a Qumran MS; the Kethib (ולא) reads 'and not'. The deportation by Esarhaddon should perhaps be related to his Egyptian campaign and to the capture of Tyre (671 BCE).
- 3 The phrase, 'on our own' evidences the exclusiveness that turned neighbours into adversaries.
- 4 Elsewhere, the expression, 'people of the land', can carry a negative connotation, referring to a lay population that was less zealous for Judaism than it should have been; but, here, it seems to refer to the resident population of the area without any negative connotation. The Kethib/Qere difference here (transposition of 2 letters) would benefit from an explanation. The literal translation of 'deterred them' is 'making slack their hands'.
- 5 The 'counsellors' were royal officials resident in Samaria. Cyrus died in 529 BCE, and Darius ruled Persia circa 522–486 BCE.
- 6 Here, the 'Aramaic' source begins, ending at 6:18; but the Chronicler summarises some of the facts in Hebrew (vv. 6–7). The reign of Ahasuerus (אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ - the NJB uses the name 'Xerxes') began at the end of 486 or the beginning of 485 BCE.

י ובמלכות אחשוורוש בתחלת מלכותו כתבו
שטנה על-ישבי יהודה וירושלם: {ס}

ז ובימי ארתחששתא כתב בשלם מתרדת טבאל
ושאר כנותו על-ארתחששתא מלך פרס וכתב
הנשתון כתוב ארמית ומתרגם ארמית: {פ}

ח רחום בעל-טעם ושמשו ספרא כתבו אגרה
חדה על-ירושלם לארתחששתא מלכא כנמא:

ט אדין רחום בעל-טעם ושמשו ספרא ושאר
כנותהון דיניא ואפרסתכיא טרפליא
אפרסיא ארכוי ארכויא בבליא שושנכיא
דהוא דהיא עלמיא: 'ושאר אמיא די הגלי
אסנפר רבא ויקירא והותב המו בקריה די
שמרין ושאר עבר-נהרה וכענת:

יא דנה פרשגן אגרתא די שלחו עלוהי

reign of Ahasuerus, at the beginning of his reign, they drew up an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

⁷ In the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and their other associates wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia against Jerusalem; the text of the letter was written in Aramaic writing and dialect.

⁸ Then Rehum the governor and Shimshai the secretary wrote a letter to King Artaxerxes, denouncing Jerusalem as follows:

⁹ "From Rehum the governor and Shimshai the secretary and their other associates, the judges, the legates, the Persian officials, the people of Uruk, Babylon and Susa – that is, the Elamites – ¹⁰ and the other peoples whom the great and illustrious Ashurbanipal deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of Transeuphrates."

¹¹ This is the text of the letter that they sent to him:

⁷ The king here (*ארתחשש*) is Artaxerxes I (464–423 BCE). The *NJB* omits 'Bishlam' (*בשלם*), following the *MT* & *NRSV*; the *LXX* takes this word as a prepositional phrase (*ἐν εἰρήμῃ* – 'in peace') rather than as a name, suggesting that Mithredath was 'in agreement with' Tabeel's letter.

⁸ Like Rehum, Shimshai was apparently a fairly high-ranking official charged with overseeing Persian interests in this part of the empire; his title was 'secretary' or 'scribe', but in a more elevated political sense than that word sometimes has elsewhere.

⁹ It seems the *Ketiv* ('that is') is better than the *Qere* ('Dehaye', a proper name).

¹⁰ 'Cities' follows the *LXX* (*πόλεις*); the *MT* has 'city'. The list of Samaritan plaintiffs includes the highest authorities in the province: the leading Persian officials and the heads of the various groups of settlers according to their countries of origin. The *NRSV*, following the *MT* (*אסנפר*), has 'Osnappar' in place of 'Ashurbanipal', here following the *NJB* & *NETB*; he reigned 668–630 BCE.

¹¹ The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation. The Masoretic accents indicate that the phrase, 'to King Artaxerxes' goes with what precedes and that the letter begins with the words 'from your servants', but it seems better to understand the letter to begin by identifying the addressee.

על־ארתחששתא מלכא עבדיך עבדך אנש
עבר־נהרה וכענת: {פ}
יב ידע להוא למלכא די יהודיא די סלקו מן־
לותך עלינא אתו לירושלם קריתא מרדתא
ובאישתא בנין ושורי ושוריא אשכללו
שכלילו ואשיא יחיטו: יב כען ידע להוא
למלכא די הן קריתא דך תתבנא ושוריא
ישתכללון מנדה־בלו והלך לא ינתנון
ואפתם מלכים תהנזק: יד כען כל־קבל די־
מלח היכלא מלחנא וערות מלכא לא אריד־
לנא למחזא על־דנה שלחנא והודענא
למלכא: טו די יבקר בספר־דכרניא די
אבהתך ותהשפח בספר דכרניא ותנדע די
קריתא דך קריא מרדא ומהנזקת מלכין
ומדנן ואשתדור עבדין בגוה מן־יומת עלמא
על־דנה קריתא דך החרבת: טז מהודעין
אנחנה למלכא די הן קריתא דך תתבנא
ושוריה ישתכללון לקבל דנה חלק בעבר
נהרא לא איתי לך: {פ}

“To King Artaxerxes, from your servants the people of Trans-euphrates:

¹² “May the king now please be informed that the Jews, who have come up from you to us, have arrived in Jerusalem and are rebuilding the rebellious and evil city; they have finished rebuilding the walls and are now digging out the foundations; ¹³ and now the king should be informed that, once this city is rebuilt and the walls are restored, they will refuse to pay tribute, custom or toll, and thus the king will incur a loss of revenue; ¹⁴ and now, because we eat the palace salt, it is not fitting for us to witness this dishonour offered to the king; we therefore send this information to the king, ¹⁵ so that a search may be made in the archives of your ancestors, in which archives you will discover and learn that this city is a rebellious city, the bane of kings and provinces, and that sedition has been stirred up there from ancient times; that is why this city was destroyed. ¹⁶ We make known to the king that, if this city is rebuilt and its walls are restored, you will soon have no territories left in Trans-euphrates.”

¹² The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹³ ‘The king will incur a loss’ is a conjectural translation; the Aramaic text reads, ‘you will harm the kings’.

¹⁴ The phrase ‘we eat the palace salt’ means ‘we are loyal to the king’ (as *NETB* translates it).

¹⁵ For such ‘archives’, see *Est* 2:23, 6:1, *Mt* 3:16.

¹⁶ In place of ‘*Transeuphrates*’, here following the *NJB* & *NETB*, the *NRSV*, following the *MT* literally, has ‘the province *Beyond the River*’.

י" פתגמא שלח מלכא

על־רחום בעל־טעם ושמשי ספרא ושאר
כנותהון די יתבין בשמרין ושאר עבר־נהרה
שלם וכעת: {ס}

י"י נשתונא די שלחתון עלינא מפרש קרי
קדמי: יט ומני שים טעם ובקרו והשפחו די
קרייתא דך מזיומת עלמא על־מלכין
מתנשאה ומרד ואשתדור מתעבד־בה:
כ ומלכין תקיפין הוּ על־ירושלם ושלטין
בכל עבר נהרה ומדה בלו והלך מתייב
להון: כא כען שימו טעם לבטלא גבריא אלך
וקרייתא דך לא תתבנא עד־מני טעמא
יתשם: כב וזהירין הוּו שלו למעבד על־דנה
למה ישגא חבלא להנזקת מלכין: {ס}

כג אדין מן־די פרשגן נשתונא די ארתחשתא
מלכא קרי קדם־רחום ושמשי ספרא וכנותהון

¹⁷ The king sent this reply:

“To Rehum the governor, to Shimshai the secretary, and to their other associates resident in Samaria and elsewhere in Trans-euphrates: Greetings!

¹⁸ “Now, the document that you sent to us has been translated and read in my presence, ¹⁹ and, by my orders, someone has made a search and has discovered that this city has engaged in insurrection against the kings in the past and that revolt and sedition have been contrived in it; ²⁰ and that powerful kings have reigned in Jerusalem, governing the whole of Transeuphrates and exacting tribute, tax and toll; ²¹ therefore, give orders for these men to cease work: this city is not to be rebuilt until I give the order. ²² Exercise appropriate caution so that there is no negligence in this matter. Why should damage grow to the hurt of the king?”

²³ As soon as the text of King Artaxerxes’ document had been read to Rehum the governor, Shimshai the secretary and their associates, they

¹⁷ The literal translation of ‘greetings’ is ‘peace’.

¹⁸ The NJB has ‘accurately translated for me’ in place of ‘translated and read in my presence’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁹ In place of ‘engaged in insurrection’, here following NETB, the NJB has ‘rebelled’.

²⁰ The phrase, ‘the whole of Transeuphrates’, is a deliberately exaggerated allusion to the empire of David and Solomon, but not even in their days did the Kingdom of Israel extend its borders to such an extent.

²¹ The literal translation of ‘until I give the order’ is ‘until a command is issued from me’.

²² For this verse, here following NETB (1st sentence) & NRSV (2nd), the NJB reads, “Beware of acting negligently in this matter. Why should the harm grow, to endanger the king?”

²³ The NRSV, following the MT, lacks ‘the governor’, here following some LXX MSS (βααλαται), Peshitta & NJB.

אָזְלוּ בְּהֵילֹו לִירוּשָׁלַם עַל־יְהוּדִיאַ וּבִטְלוּ הֵמוּ בְּאֲדָרְעַ וְחֵיל: {ס} hurried to the Jews in Jerusalem and stopped their work by force of arms.

כִּד בְּאֲדִין בְּטִלַת עֲבִידַת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵא דִי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְהוֹת בְּטָלָא עַד שְׁנַת תַּרְתִּין לְמַלְכוּת דְּרִיוֹשׁ מְלִדְ־פָרְס: {פ} ²⁴ So, the work on the Temple of God in Jerusalem then ceased and stayed discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

²⁴ This verse is editorial, linking what follows with 4:5 and taking us back to the reign of Darius, in whose second year the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the building (Hg 1:1-4, 2:1-4, Zc 4:9, 6:15). Darius I Hystaspes ruled Persia *circa* 522-486 BCE.

רות פרק ה

EZRA 5

- א וְהַתְּנַבִּי חַגִּי נְבִיאָה וְזַכְרְיָה בֶרֶעְדּוּא נְבִיאֵי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־יְהוּדֵיָא דִּי בִיהוּד וּבִירוּשָׁלַם בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־יְהוּזָן: {ס}
- ב בְּאֲדִין קָמוּ זְרֻבָבֶל בֶר־שָׁאֲלֵתִיאֵל וְיֵשׁוּעַ בֶר־יֹצְדָק וּשְׂרָיָו לְמִבְנֵי בֵית אֱלֹהֵי דִי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְעִמָּהוֹן נְבִיאֵי דִי־אֱלֹהֵי מְסַעְדִין לְהוֹן: {פ}
- ג בְּה־זְמַנָּא אָתָה עַל־יְהוּזָן תְּתַנִּי פַחַת עֲבַר־נְהַרָה וְשֵׁתֵר בּוֹזְנֵי וּכְנֻתָהוֹן וּכְן אֲמַרִין לְהֵם מִן־שֵׁם לְכֵם טַעַם בֵּיתָא דְנָה לְבָנָא וְאַשְׂרָנָא דְנָה לְשִׁכְלָלָה: {ס}
- ד אֲדִין כְּנָמָא אֲמַרְנָא לְהֵם מִן־אֲנֹן שְׁמַתָּה גְבַרְיָא דִי־דְנָה בְּנִינָא בְּנִין: ה וְעֵין אֱלֹהֵהֶם הוּת עַל־שְׁבִי
- 1 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.
- 2 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak began rebuilding the Temple of God in Jerusalem; with them were the prophets of God, supporting them.
- 3 It was then that Tattenai, the governor of Transeuphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus, “Who gave you the order to rebuild this Temple and complete this structure?”
- 4 Then they said to them, “What are the names of the men putting up this building? 5 But the eyes of their God were watching over the elders

EZRA 5

- ¹ After ‘Haggai’, the Aramaic text adds ‘the prophet’. According to Zc 1:1, Zechariah was actually the grandson of Iddo. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.
- ² Vv. 1–2 combine information from Hg and Zc. The initial enthusiasm for building the Temple, stimulated by Sheshbazzar (v. 16) had petered out, and in the autumn of 520 BCE there was still nothing to show but ruins (Hg 1:4). It may therefore be said that the work began only then. Hg and Zc stress the leading part played by Zerubbabel, but here the ‘elders’ come to the fore (v. 5).
- ³ The NRSV has ‘the province Beyond the River’ in place of ‘Transeuphrates’. ‘Tattenai’ (תְּתַנִּי) appears in cuneiform tablets as governor of this province. The exact meaning of the Aramaic word אֲשְׂרָנָא (‘structure’) here and in v. 9 is uncertain; the LXX and Vg (*muros*) understand it to mean ‘wall’. Here, it is used in collocation with בֵּיתָא (‘Temple’, literally, ‘house’), while in v. 9 it is used in parallelism with this term.
- ⁴ The NJB, following 1Es 6:4, omits the introductory, “Then they said to them,” here following the LXX (τότε ταῦτα εἶποσαν αὐτοῖς) and Peshitta; the MT has ‘we said’ (אֲמַרְנָא).
- ⁵ The idiom ‘the eye of their God’ describes the attentive care that he exercises on behalf of the object of his concern.

יהודיא ולא בטלו המו עד טעמא לדריוש יהד
ואדין יתיבון נשתונא על-דנה: {פ}

פרשגן אגרתא די-שלח תתני | פחת עבר-נהרה
ושתר בזני וכנותה אפרסכיא די בעבר נהרה
על-דריוש מלכא: פתגמא שלחו עלוהי וכדנה
כתיב בגוה

לדריוש מלכא שלמא כלא: {ס}
ידיע | להוא למלכא די-אזלנא ליהוד
מדינתא לבית אלהא רבא והוא מתבנא
אבן גלל ואע מתשם בכתליא ועבדתא דך
אספרנא מתעבדא ומצלח בידהם: {ס}
אדין שאלנא לשביא אלך כנמא אמרנא
להם מן-שם לכם טעם ביתא דנה למבניה
ואשרנא דנה לשכללה: ואף שמהתהם
שאלנא להם להודעותך די נכתב שם-
גבריא די בראשיהם: {ס}
א וכנמא פתגמא התיבונא לממר אנחנא
המו עבדוהי די-אלה שמיא וארעא ובנין

of the Jews, so they did not stop them until a report could reach Darius and an official reply about the matter could be received from him.

⁶ The copy of the letter that Tattenai, governor of Transeuphrates, Shethar-Bozenai and his associates, the officials who were in Transeuphrates, sent to King Darius. ⁷ They sent him a report, which ran as follows:

“To King Darius, hearty greetings!

⁸ “The king should be informed that we went to the province of Judah, to the Temple of the great God, which is being rebuilt with large stones; beams are being embedded in the walls; the work is being carried out energetically and is making good progress.

⁹ “We inquired of these elders, we asked them, “Who gave you permission to rebuild this Temple and to complete this structure?”

¹⁰ We also inquired of them their names, for your information, so that we could write down the names of the men who were their leaders.

¹¹ “They responded to us with the following answer, “We are the servants of the God of Heaven and earth; we are rebuilding the

⁶ In place of ‘who were in’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘of’.

⁷ The literal translation of ‘which ran as follows’, here following the NJB, is ‘and it was written in its midst’.

⁸ Literally translated, ‘large stones’ is ‘stones of rolling’; the reference is apparently to stones too large to carry.

⁹ The NJB has ‘questioning’ in place of ‘we inquired of’, here following NETB.

¹⁰ In place of ‘write down’, here following the NRSV (& NETB), the NJB has ‘record’.

¹¹ The ‘great king’ refers to Solomon.

בֵּיתָא דִּי־הוּא בְּנָה מִקְדַּמַּת דְּנָה שְׁנִין שְׁגִיָּאן
וּמְלִךְ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל רַב בְּנָהי וּשְׁכַלְלָה: יב לְהֵן מִן־
דִּי הֶרְגִּזוּ אַבְהֶתְנָא לְאַלְהָ שְׁמִיָּא יְהִב הַמּוֹ
בְּיַד נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר מֶלֶךְ־בַּבֶּל כַּסְדִּיא כַּסְדָּאָה
וּבֵיתָה דְּנָה סַתְרָה וְעַמָּה הִגְלִי לְבַבֶּל: {ס}

יג בְּרַם בְּשַׁנַּת חֲדָה לְכוּרֶשׁ מִלְכָּא דִּי בַבֶּל
כוּרֶשׁ מִלְכָּא שָׁם טַעַם בֵּית־אַלְהָא דְּנָה
לְבַנָּא: יד וְאַף מְאַנְיָא דִּי־בֵית־אַלְהָא דִּי
דְּהָבָה וְכַסְפָּא דִּי נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר הִנְפִּיק מִן־
הַיְכָלָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְהִיבֵל הַמּוֹ לְהַיְכָלָא דִּי
בַבֶּל הִנְפִּיק הַמּוֹ כוּרֶשׁ מִלְכָּא מִן־הַיְכָלָא דִּי
בַבֶּל וְהִיבוּ לְשֶׁשׁבַצַּר שְׁמָה דִּי פַחַה שְׁמָה:
טו וְאַמְרִילָה | אֵלֶּה אֵל מְאַנְיָא שְׂא אֶזְל־
אַחַת הַמּוֹ בְּהַיְכָלָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וּבֵית אַלְהָא
יִתְבְּנָא עַל־אַתְרָה: {ס}

טז אַדִּין שֶׁשׁבַצַּר דָּדְךְ אַתָּא יְהִב אֲשִׁיָּא דִּי־בֵית
אַלְהָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וּמִן־אַדִּין וְעַד־כְּעַן
מִתְבְּנָא וְלֹא שְׁלַם:

Temple built many years ago, which a great king of Israel had built and completed. ¹² However, because our ancestors angered the God of Heaven, he delivered them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldaean, who destroyed this Temple and carried away the people to Babylon.

¹³ “In the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, however, King Cyrus issued an official order that this Temple of God should be rebuilt; ¹⁴ furthermore, those gold and silver articles belonging to the Temple of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had removed from the Temple in Jerusalem and brought to the temple of Babylon, King Cyrus in turn removed from the temple in Babylon and handed back to a certain Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor. ¹⁵ He said to him, “Take these articles; go and return them to the Temple that is in Jerusalem and let the Temple of God be rebuilt on its original site.”

¹⁶ “This Sheshbazzar then came and laid the foundations of the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and it has been under construction ever since, and is not yet finished.”

¹² This verse is a reference to the catastrophic events of 586 BCE. The *Kethib/Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹³ ‘Cyrus’ was actually a Persian king, but when he conquered Babylon in 539 BCE, he apparently appropriated to himself the additional title ‘king of Babylon’; The *Peshitta* substitutes ‘Persia’ for ‘Babylon’ here, but this is probably a hyper-correction.

¹⁴ The ‘temple of Babylon’ would be that at Marduk.

¹⁵ The literal translation of ‘on its original site’, here following the *NJB* (*NETB* has ‘in its proper location’) is ‘upon its site’.

¹⁶ The elders deliberately improve on the truth (see 4:1–5, 23–24) to prevent the authorisation of 538 BCE from lapsing.

” וּכְעֵן הֵן עַל־מַלְכָּא טָב יִתְבַּקֵּר בְּבֵית גְּנוּזֵי־אֵי דִי־
מַלְכָּא תַּמָּה דִּי בְּבַבְלֹהֵן אִיתֵי דִי־מִן־כְּוֹרֶשׁ מַלְכָּא
שִׁים טַעַם לְמַבְנֵא בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵא דְדָּ בִירוּשָׁלַם
וְרַעוּת מַלְכָּא עַל־דְּנָה יִשְׁלַח עֲלֵינָא: {ס}

¹⁷ Hence, if it please the king, let search be made in the royal treasuries in Babylon, to find out if it is true that an official order was issued by King Cyrus for this Temple of God in Jerusalem to be rebuilt; and let the king's decision on this matter be sent to us.”

¹⁷ The literal translation of ‘royal treasuries’ is ‘house of the treasuries of the king’.

רות פרק ו

א *בַּאֲדִין דְּרִיוֹשׁ מַלְכָּא שָׁם טַעַם וּבְקֶרֶו | בְּבֵית
סַפְרֵיא דִּי גְנֻזֵא מֵהַחֲתִין תְּמָה בְּבַבְל: ב וְהִשְׁתַּכַּח
בְּאַחְמַתָּא בְּבִירְתָּא דִּי בְּמַדֵּי מְדִינַתָּא מְגַלָּה חֲדָה
וְכֹן־כְּתִיב בְּגִוָּה

דְּכְרוּנָה: {פ}

ג בְּשָׁנַת חֲדָה לְכוֹרֶשׁ מַלְכָּא פּוֹרֶשׁ מַלְכָּא
שָׁם טַעַם בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵא בִירוּשָׁלַם בֵּיתָא
יִתְבְּנָא אֲתֵר דִּי־דְבַחִין דְּבַחִין וְאֲשׁוּהִי
מְסוּבְלִין רוּמָה אֲמִין שְׁתִּין פְּתִיָּה אֲמִין שְׁתִּין:
ד נְדָבְכִין דִּי־אֲבֹן גְּלָל תְּלַתָּא וְנִדְבָךְ דִּי־אָע
חֲדַת וְנִפְקַתָּא מִן־בֵּית מַלְכָּא תְּתִיָּהב: ה וְאָף
מֵאֲנִי בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵא דִּי דִּהְבָּה וְכִסְפָּא דִּי
נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר הִנְפִּיק מִן־הֵיכְלָא דִּי־בִירוּשָׁלַם
וְהֵיבֵל לְבַבְל יִהְיֶיבֹן וְיִהְיֶה לְהֵיכְלָא דִּי־
בִירוּשָׁלַם לְאַתְרָהּ וְתַחַת בְּבֵית אֱלֹהֵא: {ס}

EZRA 6

¹ Then, Darius the king issued orders, and they searched in the archives deposited in the treasuries in Babylon ² and a scroll was found in the fortress of Ecbatana, which is in the province of Media, which ran as follows:

“Memorandum:

³ “In the first year of King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued this order: “Temple of God in Jerusalem. The Temple is to be rebuilt as a place of offering sacrifice and its foundations retained. Its height is to be sixty cubits, its width sixty cubits, ⁴ with three layers of large stones and one layer of timber. The cost is to be met by the royal treasury. ⁵ Furthermore, the gold and silver articles belonging to the Temple of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the Temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, are to be given back and returned to the Temple in Jerusalem, each to its proper place, and deposited in the Temple of God.”

EZRA 6

- ¹ ‘Babylon’ seems to be used here to mean the Persian Empire at large, compare ‘Cyrus the king of Babylon’ (5:13). Depending on the time of year, the king resided at Babylon itself, at Susa, or at Ecbatana, where the edict was recovered (v. 2).
- ² The NJB lacks the phrase, ‘which is in the province of Media’, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB.
- ³ The text is defective: the length of the Temple is missing and the other measurements are improbable. In place of ‘its foundations retained’, the NRSV has ‘burnt offerings are brought’; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.
- ⁴ ‘One’ follows the LXX (εἶς); the MT has ‘new’ (חֲדָת). This is the same method of building as for Solomon’s construction (see 5:8, 1K 7:9–12).
- ⁵ An alternative reading for ‘articles’ (here following the NJB) is ‘vessels’ (as NRSV & NETB)

וְכַעַן תִּתְּנִי פַחַת עֲבַר־נְהָרָה שְׂתַר בּוֹזְנֵי
 וּכְנֻתָהוֹן אֶפְרָסְכֵּיָא דִּי בַעְבַר נְהָרָה רַחֲיִקִין
 הוּן מִן־תַּמָּה: ^א שְׁבִקוּ לְעִבְדַת בֵּית־אֱלֹהָהּ
 דְּךָ פַחַת יְהוּדֵיָא וּלְשַׁבֵּי יְהוּדֵיָא בֵּית־אֱלֹהָהּ
 דְּךָ יִבְנוּן עַל־אַתְרָהּ: ^ב וּמְנֵי שָׁיִם טַעַם לְמָא
 דִּי־תַעֲבִדוּן עִם־שַׁבֵּי יְהוּדֵיָא אֱלֹךְ לְמַבְנָא
 בֵּית־אֱלֹהָהּ דְּךָ וּמְנַכְסֵי מַלְכָא דִּי מַדַּת עֲבַר
 נְהָרָה אֶסְפְּרָנָא נְפַקְתָּא תְּהוּא מְתִיבָא
 לְגַבְרֵיָא אֱלֹךְ דִּי־לָא לְבַטְלָא: ^ט וּמָה חֲשֹׁן
 וּבְנֵי תוֹרִין וְדַכְרִין וְאַמְרִין | לְעֶלּוֹן | לְאֱלֹהָהּ
 שְׁמֵיָא חֲנֻטִין מֶלַח | חֶמֶר וּמִשַׁח כְּמַאמֶר
 כְּהֵנִיא דִּי־בִירוּשָׁלַם לְהוּא מְתִיב לְהֵם יוֹם
 | בְּיוֹם דִּי־לָא שְׁלוֹ: ^י דִּי־לְהוֹן מְהַקְרְבִין
 נִיחֻזִין לְאֱלֹהָהּ שְׁמֵיָא וּמְצַלִין לְחַיֵּי מַלְכָא
 וּבְגוֹהֵי: ^{יא} וּמְנֵי שָׁיִם טַעַם דִּי כָּל־אִנְשֵׁי דִּי
 יִהְשָׁנָא פְתַגְמָא דְנָה יִתְנַסַּח אַע מִן־בֵּיתָהּ

6 “Hence, Tattenai, governor of Transeuphrates, Shethar-Bozenai and your associates, the officials of Transeuphrates, all of you keep away from there! 7 Leave the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews alone, to get on with their work on this Temple of God; let them rebuild the Temple of God on that site. 8 Herewith are my instructions regarding how you will assist these elders of the Jews in the rebuilding of that Temple of God: the cost is to be paid in full to these men from the royal revenue, that is, from the taxes of Transeuphrates, and without interruption. 9 Whatever is required – young bulls, rams, or lambs for burnt offerings to the God of Heaven, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests in Jerusalem request – is to be given them day by day without fail, 10 so that they may offer sacrifices acceptable to the God of Heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons. 11 Furthermore, I have issued an instruction that if anyone disobeys this order, a beam is to be torn out of the house of the perpetrator, who shall then be impaled on

6 NETB has ‘colleagues’ in place of ‘associates’, here following the NJB & NRSV.

7 In place of ‘governor of the Jews’, following the MT, 1Es 6:27 has ‘governor of Judah’. For ‘work on this Temple of God’, here following the MT, one LXX MS (?) reads, ‘the servant of the LORD, Zerubbabel’.

8 The NRSV reads ‘without delay’ in place of ‘without interruption’ and places the words immediately after ‘revenue’; here, we follow the NJB (NETB has ‘so that there may be no halt’).

9 The literal translation of ‘as the priests in Jerusalem request’ is ‘according to the word of the priests in Jerusalem’.

10 Prayer for a non-Yahwist sovereign is recommended – see 1M 7:33, Jr 29:7, Ba 1:10–11, and also Rm 13:1–7, 1P 2:13–17.

11 The punishment for interference was impalement, on which see Est 2:23, 9:14 and Herodotus, III 159; to make a house a rubbish-heap was the limit of contempt (2K 10:27, Dn 2:5).

וְזָקִיף יִתְמַחַא עֲלֵהי וּבֵיתָהּ נִוְלוּ יִתְעַבֵּד עַל-
 דְּנָה: יב וְאֱלֹהָא דִּי שְׁכַן שְׁמָהּ תַּמָּה יִמְגַר כָּל-
 מֶלֶךְ וְעַם דִּי | יִשְׁלַח יָדָהּ לְהַשְׁנִיחַ לְחַבְלָהּ
 בֵּית-אֱלֹהָא דְדָךְ דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם אָנָּה דְרִיּוּשׁ
 שְׁמַת טַעַם אֶסְפְּרָנָא יִתְעַבֵּד: {פ}

יג אֲדִין תַּתְנִי פַחַת עֲבַר-נְהַרָה שְׁתַּר בּוּזְנִי
 וּכְנֻתָהוֹן לְקַבֵּל דִּי-שְׁלַח דְרִיּוּשׁ מְלַכָּא כְּנַמָּא
 אֶסְפְּרָנָא עֲבָדוּ: יד וְשְׁבִי יְהוּדִיאַ בְּנִין וּמְצַלְחִין
 בְּנִבּוּאָת חֲגִי נְבִיאָה נְבִיאַ וּזְכָרִיָּה בְר־עֲדוּא וּבְנֵי
 וְשִׁכְלָלוּ מִן-טַעַם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִטַּעַם כּוֹרֵשׁ
 וְדִרִיּוּשׁ וְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁשְׁתָּא מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס: טו וְשִׁיְצִיאַ
 בֵּיתָהּ דְּנָה עַד יוֹם תַּלְתָּהּ לִירַח אֲדָר דִּי-הִיאַ
 שְׁנַת-שֵׁשׁ לְמַלְכוּת דְרִיּוּשׁ מְלַכָּא: {פ}

טז וְעֲבָדוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּהִנְיָא וְלוֹיָא וְשָׂאֵר בְּנֵי-
 גְלוּתָא חֲנַפְתַּ בֵּית-אֱלֹהָא דְנָה בְּחֻדוּשׁ: יז וְהִקְרְבוּ

it and his house is to be reduced to a rubbish-heap for his offence;
 12 and may the God who has caused his name to live there
 overthrow the king of any people who dares to defy this and
 destroy that Temple of God in Jerusalem! I, Darius, have issued
 this order. Let it be punctiliously obeyed!”

13 Tattenai governor of Transeuphrates, Shethar-Bozenai and their
 associates punctiliously obeyed what King Darius had ordered; 14 and
 the elders of the Jews made good progress over the building, thanks to
 the prophetic activity of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo,
 completing the reconstruction in accordance with the command of the
 God of Israel and the orders of Cyrus and of Darius and of Artaxerxes
 king of Persia. 15 This Temple was completed on the third day of the
 month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

16 The sons of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the sons of
 the exile, joyfully celebrated the dedication of this house of God; 17 for

12 The literal translation of ‘dares to’ (here following the NJB) is ‘puts forth his hand to’ (as NRSV).

13 In place of ‘what King Darius had ordered’, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, ‘the instructions sent by King Darius’.

14 The NJB omits ‘and of Artaxerxes king of Persia’ (referring forward to Ch. 7). This verse is a scribal interpolation on the grounds of 4:7. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here (dropping a letter) would benefit an explanation, especially in view of the fact that it is not indicated in the *Mechon Mamre* text (which has just נְבִיאָה).

15 The NJB, following 1Es 7:5, has ‘twenty-third’ in place of ‘third’, here following the MT. It was 1st April 516 BCE. This Temple, remodelled by Herod the Great (see #Jn 2:20), was in use for 585 years; it was destroyed by Titus in 70 CE.

16 There was a dedication of the new Temple as Solomon had dedicated his (1K 8:5, 63), and only then could the priests and the Levites take up their positions. No such division of positions is contained in the Pentateuch.

17 The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here would benefit from an explanation.

לְחַנֹּכֶת בַּיִת־אֱלֹהִים דָּנָה תֹורִין מֵאָה דְכָרִין מֵאֲתִין
 אֲמָרִין אַרְבַּע מֵאָה וְצִפְיָרִי עֶזֶן לְחֹטֵאָה
 עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּרִי־עֶשֶׂר לְמִנִּין שְׁבַטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 יי וְהִקִּימוּ כַהֲנִיֵּא בַּפְּלִגְתָּהוֹן וְלוֹיֵא בְּמַחְלֶקֶתְהוֹן
 עַל־עֲבִידַת אֱלֹהִים דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם כְּכַתָּב סֵפֶר
 מֹשֶׁה: {פ}

יט וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי־הַגּוֹלָה אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בְּאַרְבַּעַה עֶשֶׂר
 לְחֹדֶשׁ הָרֵאשׁוֹן: כִּי הִטְהָרוּ הַכַּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם
 כָּאֶחָד כָּל־סְטָהוּרִים וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ הַפֶּסַח לְכָל־בְּנֵי
 הַגּוֹלָה וְלֹא־חִיָּהֶם הַכַּהֲנִים וְלָהֶם: כא וַיֹּאכְלוּ בְנֵי־
 יִשְׂרָאֵל הַשָּׁבִים מִהַגּוֹלָה וְכָל הַנְּבָדָל מִטְּמֵאת גּוֹי־
 הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים לְדָרֵשׁ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 כב וַיַּעֲשׂוּ חַג־מִצּוֹת שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בְּשִׂמְחָה כִּי |
 שִׂמְחָה יְהוֹה וְהֵסֵב לֵב מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר עֲלֵיהֶם לְחֹזֶק
 יָדֵיהֶם בְּמִלְאֶכֶת בַּיִת־הָאֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 {פ}

the dedication of this house of God, they offered one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs and, as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁸ Then they installed the priests in their orders and the Levites in their positions for the ministry of God in Jerusalem, as prescribed in the Book of Moses.

¹⁹ The sons of exile kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. ²⁰ As the priests and Levites had purified themselves as one man, all were pure; so, they sacrificed the Passover for all the sons of exile, for their brothers the priests and for themselves. ²¹ The Israelites who had returned from exile and all who had renounced the filth of the people of the land to seek Yahweh, God of Israel, ate. ²² For seven days, they joyfully celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for Yahweh had made them joyful, having moved the heart of the king of Assyria to them, to aid them in the work of God, the God of Israel's house.

¹⁸ The NJB, following the Peshitta and Lucian, has 'of the Temple of God' in place of 'of God', here following the MT (and NRSV).

¹⁹ At this point, the language of the book reverts from Aramaic (4:8-6:18) back to Hebrew; Aramaic will again be used in 7:12-26.

²⁰ The NJB omits the opening, "The priests and," to maintain consistency with the end of the verse. The Chronicler characteristically represents the Levites as slaughtering the paschal victims (see 2Ch 35:6, 11). However, this was not laid down in the ritual prescriptions of Ex 12:6, Dt 16:2; and, in the NT, the faithful themselves slaughtered their victims.

²¹ In place of 'ate it', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB, following the LXX (ἐφαγον ... τὸ πασχα) has 'ate the Passover'.

²² The title, 'king of Assyria' is used perhaps because Persia now ruled the former Assyria.

רות פרק ז

EZRA 7

וְאַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּמַלְכוּת אֲרַתַחְשֶׁסְתָּא *
מֶלֶךְ־פָּרַס עֲזָרָא בֶן־שֵׁרִיָּה בֶן־עֲזַרְיָה בֶן־חִלְקִיָּה:
בֶּן־שְׁלוֹם בֶּן־צְדוֹק בֶּן־אַחִיטּוֹב: ¹ בֶּן־אַמְרִיָּה בֶן־
עֲזַרְיָה בֶן־מְרִיזוֹת: ² בֶּן־זֶרְחִיָּה בֶן־עֲזִי בֶן־בְּקִי: ³ בֶּן־
אַבִּישׁוּעַ בֶּן־פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אַלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן
הָרִאשׁ: ⁴ הוּא עֲזָרָא עָלָה מִבָּבֶל וְהוּא־סֹפֵר מֵהִיר
בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתֶּן־
לּוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עָלָיו כָּל בְּקִשְׁתּוֹ: {פ}

וַיַּעֲלוּ מִבְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם
וְהַמְשָׁרְרִים וְהַשְּׂעָרִים וְהַנְּתִינִים אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַם
בְּשַׁנַּת־שֶׁבַע לְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁסְתָּא הַמֶּלֶךְ: ⁵ וַיָּבֹא

¹ After these events, Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiyah, ² son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub, ³ son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth, ⁴ son of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, ⁵ son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of the chief priest Aaron - ⁶ this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a scribe versed in the Law of Moses, which Yahweh, God of Israel, had given. The king gave him everything that he asked for, since the hand of Yahweh his God was over him.

⁷ A number of Israelites, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers and temple slaves came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of the reign of King Artaxerxes. ⁸ Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the

EZRA 7

- ¹ The LXX rendering of 'Seraiah' (שֵׁרִיָּה), 'Azariah' (עֲזַרְיָה) & 'Hilkiyah' (חִלְקִיָּה) is Σαραϊου, Αζαριου & Ελκια, respectively.
- ² Throughout vv. 1-5, NETB adds 'who was the' before of each occurrence of 'son of'; here, we follow the MT, NJB & NRSV. The LXX rendering of 'Shallum' (שְׁלוֹם), 'Zadok' (צְדוֹק) & 'Ahitub' (אַחִיטּוֹב) is Σαλουμ, Σαδδουκ & Αχιτωβ, respectively.
- ³ The LXX rendering of 'Amariah' (אַמְרִיָּה), 'Azariah' (עֲזַרְיָה) & 'Meraioth' (מְרִיזוֹת) is Σαμαρια, Εσρια & Μαρερωθ, respectively.
- ⁴ The LXX rendering of 'Zerariah' (זֶרְחִיָּה), 'Uzzi' (עֲזִי) & 'Bukki' (בְּקִי) is Ζαρια, Σαουια & Βοκκι, respectively.
- ⁵ The LXX rendering of 'Abishua' (אַבִּישׁוּעַ), 'Phinehas' (פִּינְחָס) & 'Eleazar' (אַלְעָזָר) is Αβισουε, Φινεεζ & Ελεαζαρ, respectively. Ezra's genealogy reflects the exiles' anxiety to see an accredited priesthood (2:62, 8:2) but the Chronicler has probably constructed it on the basis of 1Ch 5:28ff.
- ⁶ Skill in the art of writing made the scribes indispensable officials in an oriental court. Hence, the title 'scribe' (vv. 12 and 21) indicates that Ezra was a kind of minister for Jewish affairs at the Persian court.
- ⁷ In place of '(they) came up', here following the MT (וַיַּעֲלוּ), NJB & NRSV, NETB reads, 'he (Ezra) brought up' (וַיַּעֲלֵ), substituting the Hiphil singular for the Qal plural.
- ⁸ The 'seventh year of the reign of King Artaxerxes' was 458 BCE.

יְרוּשָׁלַם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי הַיָּא שְׁנַת הַשְּׁבִיעִית
 לַמֶּלֶךְ: ^ט כִּי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן הוּא יָסַד
 הַמַּעֲלָה מִבָּבֶל וּבְאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי בָּא אֶל־
 יְרוּשָׁלַם כַּיְד־אֱלֹהֵיו הַטּוֹבָה עָלָיו: ' כִּי עֲזָרָא הַכִּיִן
 לָבְבוּ לְדַרְשׁ אֶת־תּוֹרַת יְהוָה וּלְעֲשׂוֹת וּלְלַמֵּד
 בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל חֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט: {ס}

^{יא} וְזֶה | פְּרִשְׁטָן הַנְּשִׁתָּן אֲשֶׁר נָתַן הַמֶּלֶךְ
 אֶרְתַּחְשֶׁסְתָּא לְעֲזָרָא הַכִּהֵן הַסֹּפֵר סֹפֵר דְּבַרֵּי
 מִצְוֹת־יְהוָה וַחֲקִיו עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

^{יב} אֶרְתַּחְשֶׁסְתָּא מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵיָא לְעֲזָרָא כְּהֵנָּא
 סֹפֵר דְתָא דִּי־אֱלֹהֵי שְׁמֵיָא גְמִיר וּכְעֵנַת:
^{יג} מְנֵי שְׁיָם טַעַם דִּי כָל־מִתְנַדָּב בְּמַלְכוּתֵי מִן־
 עַמָּא יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכַהֲנוּהֵי וְלוֹיָא לְמַהֲדָּ לִירוּשָׁלַם
 עִמָּךְ יְהֵד: ^{יד} כָּל־קַבְּלָל דִּי מִן־קַדָּם מַלְכָּא
 וְשִׁבְעַת יַעֲטֵהֵי שְׁלִיחַ לְבַקְרָה עַל־יְהוּד
 וְלִירוּשָׁלַם בְּדַת אֱלֹהֵי דִי בִידְךָ: ^{טו} וְלַהֲיַבְלָה

fifth month, in the seventh year of the king's reign, ⁹ for he had ordered the departure from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, since the kindly hand of his God was over him. ¹⁰ For Ezra had devoted himself to studying the Law of Yahweh and to put into practice and teach its statutes and rulings.

¹¹ This is the text of the document that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra, the priest-scribe, a student of matters pertaining to Yahweh's commandments and statutes relating to Israel:

¹² "Artaxerxes, king of kings, to the priest Ezra, Secretary of the Law of the God of Heaven: greetings!

¹³ "I decree that any of the people of Israel in my kingdom, or their priests and Levites, who freely chose to go to Jerusalem, may go with you, ¹⁴ for you are sent by the king and his seven counsellors to investigate how the Law of your God, in which you are expert, is being applied in Judah and Jerusalem, ¹⁵ and to transport the

⁹ 'He had ordered' is a conjectural translation (יָסַד); the MT has 'foundation' (יָסַד).

¹⁰ The literal translation of 'devoted himself' is 'established his heart'.

¹¹ Note the order: **1** permission for Jews living in Babylon to settle in Judah (v. 13); **2** elevation of the Mosaic Law to state law (vv. 25-26); **3** the financial arrangements (vv. 15-20).

¹² Vv. 12-26 (the king's letter) are in Aramaic. 'Greetings' (the NRSV uses 'peace') follows 1Es 8: the MT has a word that means either 'done' (according to a footnote in the NJB) or 'perfect' (according to one in the NRSV).

¹³ The literal translation of 'I decree that', here following the NRSV, is 'from me is place a decree that'.

¹⁴ On the 'seven counsellors', see Est 1:14. The literal translation of 'in which you are expert', here following the NJB, is 'which is in your hands'.

¹⁵ In place of 'transport', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'convey' and NETB has 'bring'.

כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב דֵּי־מֶלֶכָא וְיַעֲטוּזְהִי הַתְּנַדְבוּ לְאַלְהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל דֵּי בִירוּשָׁלַם מְשַׁכְנָה: ^{טז} וְכֹל כֶּסֶף
וְזָהָב דֵּי תְהַשְׁכַּח בְּכָל מְדִינַת בָּבֶל עִם
הַתְּנַדְבוֹת עִמָּא וְכַהֲנֵיָא מְתַנְדְּבִין לְבֵית
אַלְהֵהֶם דֵּי בִירוּשָׁלַם:

י" כָּל־קֶבֶל דְּנָה אֶסְפְּרָנָא תְקִנָּא בְּכֶסֶף דְּנָה
תּוֹרִין | דְּכָרִין אֶמְרִין וּמִנְחַתְהוֹן וְנִסְפִיֵּהוֹן
וְתִקְרַב הַמּוֹ עַל־מִדְבַּחָה דֵּי בֵית אֱלֹהֵכֶם דֵּי
בִירוּשָׁלַם: י"י וּמָה דֵּי עַלִיד עֲלֵךְ וְעַל־אַחֲךְ
אַחִיד יֵיטֵב בְּשַׁאֲר כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לְמַעֲבַד
כְּרַעוֹת אֱלֹהֵכֶם תַּעֲבֹדוּן:

י"ט וּמֵאֲנִיָּא דֵּי־מִתִּיבִין לָךְ לְפִלְחֹן בֵּית אֱלֹהֵךְ
הַשָּׁלַם קֹדֶם אֱלֹהֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם: כ' וְשַׁאֲר חֲשׁוֹת
בֵּית אֱלֹהֵךְ דֵּי יִפְלֹלְךְ לְמִנְתָּן תִּנְתָּן מִן־בֵּית
גְּנֹזֵי מֶלֶכָא:

כ"א וּמֵנִי אֲנָה אֶרְתַּחֲשַׁסְתָּא מֶלֶכָא שִׁים טַעִם
לְכֹל גְּזַבְרֵיָא דֵּי בַעֲבַר נַהֲרָה דֵּי כָל־דֵּי
יִשְׂאֲלֻנְכוּן עֲזָרָא כַּהֲנָא סַפְּר דָּתָא דֵּי־אַלְהֵי

silver and gold that the king and his counsellors have voluntarily offered to the God of Israel who resides in Jerusalem,¹⁶ as well as all the silver and gold that you shall find throughout the province of Babylon and the voluntary offerings freely contributes by the people and the priests for the Temple of their God in Jerusalem.

¹⁷ “This money you will punctiliously use for the purchase of bulls, rams, lambs and the materials for the oblations and libations that go with them, offering these on the altar of the Temple of your God in Jerusalem,¹⁸ and using the remainder of the silver and gold in accordance with the will of your God as you and your brothers may think fit.

¹⁹ “You will deliver the vessels that have been given you for the ministry of the Temple of God, to the God of Jerusalem,²⁰ and whatever else is needed and you are obliged to supply for the Temple of your God, you will supply from the royal treasury.

²¹ “I, King Artaxerxes, have issued the following instruction to all the treasurers of Transeuphrates: Whatever the priest Ezra, Secretary of the Law of the God of Heaven, may request of you is

¹⁶ The NJB has ‘received’ in place of ‘shall find’, here following the NRSV (NETB lacks ‘shall’).

¹⁷ In place of ‘oblations’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘grain offerings’ and NETB has ‘meal offerings’.

¹⁸ The ‘will of God’ refers to the Law, as in v. 25. The *Kethib*/*Qere* differences here would benefit from explanations.

¹⁹ In place of ‘vessels’, here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘articles’.

²⁰ The literal translation of ‘you are obliged to supply’ is ‘may fall on you to give’.

²¹ ‘Of Transeuphrates’ here follows the NJB; the NRSV has ‘in the province Beyond the River’; the literal translation of the preposition is ‘who are in’.

שְׁמִיָּא אֶסְפְּרָנָא יִתְעַבְדִּי: ^{כב} עַד־כֶּסֶף כִּכְרִין
מָאָה וְעַד־חֲנֻטִין כּוֹרִין מָאָה וְעַד־חֲמֵר בְּתִין
מָאָה וְעַד־בְּתִין מִשַׁח מָאָה וּמִלַּח דִּי־לָא
כֹּתֵב: ^{כג} כָּל־דִּי מִן־טַעַם אֱלֹהִים שְׁמִיָּא יִתְעַבְדִּי
אֲדַרְזֻדָּא לְבֵית אֱלֹהִים שְׁמִיָּא דִּי־לִמָּה לְהוּא
קִצְף עַל־מַלְכוּת מַלְכָּא וּבְנוֹהִי: ^{כד} וְלָכֵן
מֵהוּדְעִין דִּי כָל־כְּהֻנָּיָא וְלוֹיָא זְמַרְיָא תִּרְעִיָּא
נְתִינִיָּא וּפְלָחֵי בֵּית אֱלֹהִים דְּנָה מְנַדָּה בְּלוּ
וְהִלְדִּי לָא שְׁלִיט לְמַרְמָא עֲלֵיהֶם:

^{כה} וְאַנְתָּ עֲזָרָא כְּחַכְמַת אֱלֹהִים דִּי־בִידֶךָ מִנִּי
שְׁפָטִין וְדִינִין דִּי־לְהוֹן דְּאִנִּין דְּאִנִּין לְכָל־
עַמָּא דִּי בְּעֵבֶר נְהֵרָה לְכָל־יְדַעֵי דְתֵי אֱלֹהִים
וְדִי לָא יָדַע תְּהוּדְעוּן: ^{כו} וְכָל־דִּי־לָא לְהוּא
עֲבָד דְּתָא דִּי־אֱלֹהִים וְדָתָא דִּי מַלְכָּא
אֶסְפְּרָנָא דִּינָה לְהוּא מִתְעַבְדִּי מִנָּה הֵן לְמוֹת

to be punctiliously complied with: ²² up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred kors of wheat, one hundred bats of wine, one hundred bats of oil, and unlimited salt. ²³ Whatever the God of Heaven demands for the Temple of the God of Heaven must be diligently provided; why should retribution come on the realm of the king and of his sons? ²⁴ You are further informed that it is against the law to impose tribute, tax, or toll on any of the priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, temple slaves or other servants of this Temple of God.

²⁵ “You, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God that is in your hand, are to appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice for the all the people who are in Transeuphrates; that is, for all who know the Law of your God; and you are to teach it to those who do not know it. ²⁶ And whoever will not comply with the Law of your God and the law of the king, let the sentence be executed on him

²² The literal translation of ‘unlimited’ is ‘he did not write’. A ‘talent’ is about 30 Kg (965 Troy ounces).

²³ The Aramaic word used here for ‘retribution’ (קִצְף) is usually used in the Hebrew Bible for God’s anger (the NRSV & NETB have ‘wrath’) as opposed to human anger (but contrast Qo 5:16(17), Est 1:18, 2K 3:27; the fact that this word is used here may have theological significance, pointing to the possibility of divine judgment if the responsible parties should fail to make available these provisions for the temple.

²⁴ The literal translation of ‘you are further informed’ (here following the NJB – the NRSV has ‘we also notify you’ & NETB has ‘be aware of the fact’) is ‘we are making known to you’.

²⁵ The ‘wisdom’ of Ezra is that of the new law book of v. 14, which he was empowered to enforce through magistrates and scribes, with four types of penalty. ‘Judges’ follows the MT (שְׁפָטִין) & NRSV; the NJB, following the LXX (γραμματεῖς), has ‘scribes’. The Kethib/Qere difference here warrants an explanation.

²⁶ The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

הַן לְשֵׁרְשׁוֹ לְשֵׁרְשֵׁי הַן-לְעַנְשׁ נִכְסִין
וְלְאַסּוּרִין: {פ}

swiftly, whether it be death, banishment, confiscation of goods, or imprisonment.”

כִּי בָרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן כְּזֹאת בְּלִב
הַמֶּלֶךְ לְפָאֵר אֶת-בַּיִת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:
כִּי וְעָלִי הִטָּה-חֶסֶד לְפָנַי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּזְעַצּוּ וּלְכָל-שָׂרֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגְּבָרִים וְאֲנִי הִתְחַזַּקְתִּי כִּי-דִיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
עָלִי וְאֶקְבְּצָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל רָאשִׁים לְעֹלֹת עִמָּי: {פ}

²⁷ Blessed be Yahweh, God of our ancestors, who moved the king’s heart in this way to restore the beauty of the Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem,
²⁸ won for me the faithful love of the king, his counsellors, and all the king’s powerful officials! Taking heart since the hand of Yahweh my God was on me, I gathered Israelite leaders to go with me.

²⁷ At this point, the language of the book reverts from Aramaic (7:12–26) back to Hebrew.

²⁸ For the MT reading רָאשִׁים (*‘leaders’, literally, ‘heads’*), some LXX MSS have *ανδρας* (*‘men’*), although *Codex Sinaiticus* has *‘rulers’* (*ἄρχοντας*).

EZRA 8

רות פרק ח

- א וְאֵלֶּה רָאשֵׁי אֲבֹתֵיהֶם וְהִתְיַחֲשׂוּ הָעֲלִים עִמִּי 1 These, with their genealogies, were the heads of families who set out
בְּמַלְכוּת אֲרִתַחְשֶׁסְתָא הַמֶּלֶךְ מִבְּבֶל: {ס} from Babylon with me in the reign of King Artaxerxes:
- ב מִבְּנֵי פִינְחָס גֶּרְשֹׁם {ס} 2 Of the sons of Phinehas: Gershom;
מִבְּנֵי אִיתָמָר דָּנִיֵּאל {ס} of the sons of Ithamar: Daniel;
מִבְּנֵי דָוִד חֲטוּשׁ: {ס} of the sons of David: Hattush.
- ג מִבְּנֵי שְׁכַנְיָה {ס} 3 Of the sons of Shecaniah;
מִבְּנֵי פֶרְעֵשׁ זְכַרְיָה וְעִמּוֹ הִתְיַחֲשׂוּ לְזָכָרִים מֵאָה 4 of the sons of Parosh: Zechariah, and with him a hundred and fifty
וְחֲמִשִּׁים: {ס} males officially registered.
- ד מִבְּנֵי פַחַת מוֹאֵב אֱלִיהוּעֵינִי בֶן־זְרַחְיָה וְעִמּוֹ 4 Of the sons of Pahath-Moab: Elioenai son of Zerahiah, and with him
מֵאֲתַיִם הַזְּכָרִים: {ס} two hundred males.
- ה מִבְּנֵי שְׁכַנְיָה בֶן־יַחְזִיאֵל וְעִמּוֹ שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת 5 Of the sons of Zattu: Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him three
הַזְּכָרִים: {ס} hundred males.
- ו וּמִבְּנֵי עֲדִין עֶבֶד בֶּן־יוֹנָתָן וְעִמּוֹ חֲמִשִּׁים 6 And of the sons of Adin: Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him
הַזְּכָרִים: {ס} fifty males.

EZRA 8

- ¹ This list, interrupting Ezra's report from 7:28 to 8:15, consists of two priests descended from Phinehas and Ithamar, a descendant of the royal line of David and twelve families, the heads of which (with one exception) occur in Ch. 2 (= Ne 7). It is the work either of the Chronicler or of an editor. The text is defective at various points and has been emended on the basis of 1Es 8 and the LXX.
- ² For 'Gershom' (גֶּרְשֹׁם), 'Ithamar' (אִיתָמָר) & 'Hattush' (חֲטוּשׁ), the LXX reads Γηρσωμ, Ιθαμαρ & Ατους, respectively.
- ³ Note that, after, 'of the sons of Shecaniah', no descendant is identified in what follows, contrary to the pattern of the context elsewhere. However, it seems better to understand the first phrase of this verse with the end of v. 2. The LXX rendering of 'Shecaniah' (שְׁכַנְיָה) & 'Parosh' (פֶּרְעֵשׁ) is Σαχαρια & Φορος, respectively.
- ⁴ The LXX rendering of 'Pahath-Moab' (פַּחַת מוֹאֵב), 'Elioenai' (אֱלִיהוּעֵינִי) & 'Zerahiah' (זְרַחְיָה) is, respectively, Φααθμωαβ, Ελιουα & Ζαραια.
- ⁵ The MT lacks 'of Zattu', here following the LXX (Ζαττωης), 1Es 8:32, the NJB, NRSV & NETB.
- ⁶ For 'Adin' (עֲדִין), 'Ebed' (עֶבֶד) & 'Jonathan' (יוֹנָתָן), the LXX reads Αδιν, Ωβηδ & Ιωναθαν, respectively.

- ז ומבני עילם ישעיה בן־עתליה ועמו שבעים
הזכרים: {ס} 7 And of the sons of Elam: Jeshaiiah son of Athaliah, and with him
seventy males.
- ח ומבני שפטיה זבדיה בן־מיכאל ועמו שמנים
הזכרים: {ס} 8 And of the sons of Shephatiah: Zebadiah son of Michael, and with
him eighty males.
- ט מבני יואב עבדיה בן־יחיאל ועמו מאתיים
ושמנה עשר הזכרים: {ס} 9 Of the sons of Joab: Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred
and eighteen males.
- י ומבני שלומית בן־יוספיה ועמו מאה וששים
הזכרים: {ס} 10 And of the sons of Bani: Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him a
hundred and sixty males.
- יא ומבני בבי זכריה בן־בבי ועמו עשרים ושמונה
הזכרים: {ס} 11 And of the sons of Bebai: Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him
twenty-eight males.
- יב ומבני עזגד יוחנן בן־הקטן ועמו מאה ועשרה
הזכרים: {ס} 12 And of the sons of Azgad: Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him a
hundred and ten males.
- יג ומבני אדניקם אחרנים ואלה שמותם אליפלט
יעיאל ושמעיה ועמהם ששים הזכרים: {ס} 13 And of the sons of Adonikam: the younger sons, whose names are:
Eliphelet, Jeiel and Shemaiah, and with them sixty males.
- יד ומבני בגוי עותי זבוד וזכור ועמו שבעים
הזכרים: {פ} 14 And of the descendants of Bigvai: Uthai son of Zabud, and with him
seventy males.

⁷ For 'Elam', (עילם), 'Jeshaiiah' (ישעיה) & 'Athaliah' (עתליה), the LXX reads *Hλαμ, Ιεσια & Αθελια*, respectively.

⁸ For 'Shephatiah' (שפטיה), 'Zebadiah' (זבדיה) & 'Michael' (מיכאל), the LXX reads *Σαφατια, Ζαβδια & Μιχαηλ*, respectively.

⁹ For 'Joab' (יואב), 'Obadiah' (עבדיה) & 'Jehiel' (יחיאל), the LXX reads *Ιωαβ, Αβαδια & Ιηηλ*, respectively.

¹⁰ The MT lacks 'Bani', here following the LXX and 1Es 8:36. For 'Shelomith' (שלומית) & 'Josiphiah' (יוספיה), the LXX reads *Σαλιμουθ & Ιωσεφια*.

¹¹ The LXX rendering of 'Bebai' (בבי) is *Βαβι*.

¹² For 'Azgad' (עזגד), 'Johanan' (יוחנן) & 'Hakkatan' (הקטן), the LXX reads *Ασγαδ, Ιωαναν & Ακαταν*, respectively.

¹³ The LXX renders 'Adonikam' (אדניקם), 'Eliphelet' (אליפלט), 'Jeiel' (יעיאל) & 'Shemaiah' (שמעיה) as *Αδωνικαμ, Αλιφαλατ, Ιηηλ & Σαμαιο*.

¹⁴ In place of '(and) Zabud', here following the *Ketiv* (זבוד), *Peshitta*, *Lucian* (*Ζαβουδ*), *NRSV* & *NJB*, the *Qere* has '(and) Zaccur' (וזכור), as does the *Vg* (*Zachur*); the LXX (*Alexandrinus/Sinaiticus*) lacks the name altogether.

^{טו} וְאֶקְבְּצֵם אֶל־הַנָּהָר הַבֵּא אֶל־אֵהוּא וַנַּחֲנָה שָׁם
יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה וְאָבִינָה בְּעַם וּבְכַהֲנַיִם וּמִבְּנֵי לֵוִי לֹא־
מָצָאתִי שָׁם: ^{טז} וְאֶשְׁלַחָה לְאַלְיָעֹזֶר לְאַרְיֵאל
לְשִׁמְעֵיָה וּלְאַלְנָתָן וּלְיָרִיב וּלְאַלְנָתָן וּלְזַכְרְיָה
וּלְמִשְׁלָם רְאִשִׁים וּלְיֹזִירִיב וּלְאַלְנָתָן מְבִינִים:
^{יז} וְאוּצֵאָה וְאַצְוָה אוֹתָם עַל־אֲדוֹ הָרֹאשׁ בְּכַסְפֵּיָא
הַמָּקוֹם וְאַשְׁיִמָּה בְּפִיהֶם דְּבָרִים לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדוֹ
אֲחֵיו הַנְּתוּנִים הַנְּתִינִים בְּכַסְפֵּיָא הַמָּקוֹם לְהֵבִיא־
לָנוּ מִשְׁרָתִים לְבַיִת אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ^{יח} וַיָּבִיאוּ לָנוּ כִּיד־
אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַטּוֹבָה עָלֵינוּ אִישׁ שְׁכָל מִבְּנֵי מַחְלֵי בֶן־
לֵוִי בֶן־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשִׁרְבִיָּה וּבְנָיו וְאֲחֵיו שְׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂר:
^{יט} וְאֶת־חֲשַׁבְיָה וְאֶתֹו יִשְׁעִיָה מִבְּנֵי מֵרָרִי אֲחֵיו
וּבְנֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרִים: {ס}

¹⁵ I assembled them near the river that runs to Ahava, where we camped for three days. As I reviewed the people, I noticed laymen and priests, but I could not discover any Levites there. ¹⁶ I then sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah and Meshullam, leaders, and Joiarib and Elnathan, who were wise, ¹⁷ and sent them to Iddo, the leading man of a place called Casiphia; I told them what they were to say to Iddo and his kinsmen living at the place called Casiphia, that is, to provide us with people to serve the Temple of our God; ¹⁸ and because the hand of God was good to us, they sent us a wise man of the sons of Mahli son of Levi, son of Israel, a certain Sherebiah with his sons and kinsmen: eighteen men; ¹⁹ also Hashabiah and with him his brother Jeshaiiah of the sons of Merari with his kinsmen and sons: twenty men.

^כ וּמִן־הַנְּתִינִים שְׁנַתָּן דְּוִיד וְהַשְּׂרָיִם לְעַבְדַּת הַלְוִיִּם
נְתִינִים מֵאֲתָיִם וְעֶשְׂרִים כָּלָם נִקְבוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת:

²⁰ And two hundred and twenty temple slaves, sons of the temple slaves whom David and his officials assigned to serve the Levites, all of them

¹⁵ The NJB & NETB have 'canal' in place of 'river', here following the MT & NRSV; the site of 'Ahava' (אֵהוּא) is unknown, but the 'river' was doubtless a tributary of the Euphrates. The dearth of Levites parallels that of 2:40.

¹⁶ The NJB, following 1Es 8:43 and the LXX, has 'judicious men' in place of 'leaders'. The name 'Elnathan' (אֶלְנָתָן) occurs twice in this list; some, assuming an accidental repetition, include it only once (cf. NAB).

¹⁷ 'Kinsmen' (literally, 'brothers', the NRSV has 'colleagues') follows 1Es 8:45, the LXX (ἀδελφούς) & Vg (fratres); the MT has 'brother'. 'Casiphia' is unknown; the text does not imply that there was a cult-centre there; if there was a concentration of Levites there, it was because the exiles had been resettled according to their family groups and original communities. The Kethib/Qere differences here would benefit from explanations.

¹⁸ In place of 'a certain Sherebiah with his sons and kinsmen', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'namely Sherebiah, with his sons and kin'.

¹⁹ Here, as also in v. 18, the MT (& NRSV) does not include the final word 'men', here following the NJB.

²⁰ In place of 'his officials', here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has 'the princes'.

כא וְאָקְרָא שֵׁם צוּם עַל־הַנָּהָר אֲהוּא לְהַתְעַנּוֹת
לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְבַקֵּשׁ מִמֶּנּוּ דֶּרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לָנוּ וּלְטַפְּנוּ
וּלְכָל־רִכּוּשֵׁנוּ: כב כִּי בִשְׂתֵי לְשָׂאוֹל מִזֶּה־מִּלָּד חֵיל
וּפָרָשִׁים לְעִזְרָנוּ מֵאוֹיֵב בְּדֶרֶךְ כִּי־אָמַרְנוּ לְמֶלֶךְ
לֵאמֹר יְד־אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל־כָּל־מִבְקָשׁוֹ לְטוֹבָה וְעִזּוֹ
וְאִפּוֹ עַל כָּל־עֲזָבָיו: כג וּנְצוּמָה וּנְבַקְשָׁה מֵאֱלֹהֵינוּ
עַל־זֹאת וַיִּעֲתֶר לָנוּ:

כד וְאֲבָדִילָה מִשָּׂרֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר לְשֵׁרְבִיָּה
חֲשַׁבְיָה וְעַמְהֵם מֵאֲחֵיהֶם עֲשָׂרָה: כה וְאֲשַׁקּוּלָה
וְאֲשַׁקְלָה לָהֶם אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף וְאֶת־הַזָּהָב וְאֶת־הַכֵּלִים
תְּרוּמַת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַהַרְיָמוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיַּעֲצִיּוּ וְשָׂרָיו
וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּמְצָאִים: כו וְאֲשַׁקְלָה עַל־יָדָם כֶּסֶף
כַּפָּרִים שְׁש־מֵאוֹת וְחֲמִשִּׁים וְכָל־כֶּסֶף מֵאָה
לְכַפָּרִים זָהָב מֵאָה כֶּכֶר: כז וְכַפָּרֵי זָהָב עֲשָׂרִים
לְאֲדָרְכָנִים אֶלְף וְכָלֵי נְחֹשֶׁת מְצֻהָב טוֹבָה שְׁנַיִם

designated by name. ²¹ There, besides the River Ahava, I then declared a fast, to humble ourselves before our God and seek from him a safe journey for us, our children and all our property. ²² For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of cavalry to protect us from the enemy on our road, as we had already said to the king, “The hand of our God is on all who seek him, but his great wrath befalls all who forsake him.” ²³ So, we fasted and pleaded with our God about this, and he heard us.

²⁴ I next chose twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah and ten of their kinsmen. ²⁵ To them I weighed out the silver, the gold and the utensils, the contributions that the king, his counsellors, his notables and all the Israelites there present had made for the Temple of our God.

²⁶ To them I weighed out and handed over six hundred and fifty talents of silver, one hundred utensils of silver worth two talents, one hundred talents of gold, ²⁷ twenty golden bowls valued at a thousand darics and two utensils of fine burnished copper as precious as gold. ²⁸ I said to

²¹ On preparatory fasting, see Est 4:16, 2Ch 20:3, Jr 36:9.

²² In place of ‘was ashamed’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘should have been ashamed’. A number of modern translations regard ‘the enemy’ as a collective singular and translate ‘from enemies’ (also in v. 31). The literal translation of ‘his great wrath’ is ‘his strength and his anger’; the expression is a hendiadys (one concept expressed through two terms).

²³ In place of ‘he heard us’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘he listened to our entreaty’ and NETB has ‘he answered us’.

²⁴ The NRSV has ‘set apart’ in place of ‘chose’, here following the NJB.

²⁵ The literal translation of ‘Temple’ is ‘house’. The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

²⁶ ‘Two talents’ is conjectural (following the NJB); the number is lacking in the MT (and NRSV).

²⁷ Alternative readings for ‘fine burnished copper’ (NJB) are ‘fine polished bronze’ (NRSV) and ‘gleaming bronze’ (NETB).

²⁸ In place of ‘holy’ (twice in this verse), here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘consecrated’.

חֲמוּדַת כְּזָהָב: כִּי וְאָמְרָה אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה
וְהַכֵּלִים קֹדֶשׁ וְהַכֶּסֶף וְהַזָּהָב נִדְבָה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
אֲבֹתֵיכֶם: כִּי שִׁקְדוּ וְשָׁמְרוּ עַד־תִּשְׁקְלוּ לִפְנֵי שְׂרֵי
הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְשְׂרֵי־הָאֲבוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בִּירוּשָׁלַם
הַלְשָׁכוֹת בַּיִת יְהוָה: לִ וְקִבְלוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם
מִשְׁקַל הַכֶּסֶף וְהַזָּהָב וְהַכֵּלִים לְהָבִיא לִירוּשָׁלַם
לְבַיִת אֱלֹהֵינוּ: {פ}

לֹא וְנִסְעָה מִנְהַר אַחָוָה בְּשָׁנִים עָשָׂר לַחֲדָשׁ
הָרֵאשׁוֹן לָלֶכֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם וַיִּדְאֱלֵהֵנוּ הַיְתָה עָלֵינוּ
וַיִּצִילֵנוּ מִכָּף אוֹיֵב וְאוֹרֵב עַל־הַדֶּרֶךְ: לֵב וְנִבְּוָה
יְרוּשָׁלַם וְנִשְׁבַּ שֵׁם יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה: לֵג וּבֵינֹם הַרְבִּיעֵי
נִשְׁקַל הַכֶּסֶף וְהַזָּהָב וְהַכֵּלִים בְּבַיִת אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל יַד־
מְרִמֹת בֶּן־אוּרִיָּה הַכֹּהֵן וְעַמּוֹ אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־פִּינְחָס
וְעַמָּהֶם יוֹזָבָד בֶּן־יִשׁוּעַ וְנוֹעֲדִיָּה בֶּן־בְּנָוִי הַלְוִיִּם:
לִד בְּמִסְפָּר בְּמִשְׁקַל לְכֹל וַיִּכְתַּב כָּל־הַמִּשְׁקַל בְּעַת
הַהִיא: {פ}

לֵה הַבָּאִים מִהַשְׁבִּי בְּנֵי־הַגּוֹלָה הַקְּרִיבוּ עֲלוֹת
לְאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פְּרִים שְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל

them, “You are holy to Yahweh; these utensils are holy too; the silver and gold are a voluntary offering to Yahweh, God of your ancestors.

²⁹ Guard them carefully until you weigh them out to the leading priests, the Levites, and the heads of the families of Israel in Jerusalem in the rooms of the Temple of Yahweh.” ³⁰ The priests and Levites then took charge of the silver, the gold and the utensils thus weighed, to bring them to Jerusalem to the Temple of our God.

³¹ On the twelfth day of the first month, we left the River Ahava to make our way to Jerusalem; the hand of our God was over us and protected us from enemies and bandits on our way. ³² When we arrived in Jerusalem, we remained there for three days. ³³ On the fourth day, the silver, the gold, and the utensils were weighed in the Temple of our God and handed over to the priest Meremoth son of Uriah and, with him, Eleazar son of Phinehas; with them were the Levites Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui. ³⁴ By number and weight, all was there. The total weight was recorded at the same time.

³⁵ When the exiles arrived from their captivity, they offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel – twelve bulls on behalf of all Israel, ninety-

²⁹ The ‘rooms’ (the NRSV has ‘chambers’) were the Temple storehouses (10:6, Ne 10:37, 13:4–7).

³⁰ The literal translation of ‘took charge of’ is ‘received’.

³¹ Literally translated, this verse ends, “from the hand of the enemy and the one who lies in wait.”

³² In place of ‘remained there’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘rested’.

³³ For ‘Meremoth’ (מְרִמֹת), ‘Jozabad’ (יֹזָבָד), ‘Noadiah’ (נוֹעֲדִיָּה) & ‘Binnui’ (בְּנָוִי), the LXX reads *Μεριμωθ, Ιωζαβαδ, Νωαδια & Βαναια*, respectively.

³⁴ The phrase ‘all was there’ (here following the NJB – the NRSV has ‘the total was counted’) is not present in the MT.

³⁵ The NJB, following 1Es 8:63, has ‘seventy-two’ in place of ‘seventy-seven’, here following the MT.

אֵילִים | תְּשַׁעִים וְשֵׁשׁ כְּבָשִׁים שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה
צְפִירֵי חֲטָאת שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר הַכֹּל עֹלָה לַיהוָה: {פ}

לִי וְיִתְּנוּ | אֶת־דְּתֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאַחַשְׁדָּרְפָּנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ
וּפְחֻזֹת עֶבֶר הַנָּהָר וְנִשְׂאוּ אֶת־הָעַם וְאֶת־בֵּית
הָאֱלֹהִים: {ס}

36 They also delivered the king's instructions to the king's satraps and the governors of Transeuphrates, who then supported the people and the Temple of God.

³⁶ In place of 'instructions', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'commissions' and NETB has 'decrees'.

רות פרק ט

EZRA 9

א* וּכְבָלוֹת אֱלֹהִים נִגְשׁוּ אֵלַי הַשָּׂרִים לֵאמֹר לֹא-
נִבְדְּלוּ הָעָם יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם מֵעַמֵּי
הָאֲרָצוֹת כִּתְעַבְתִּיהֶם לִפְנֵעֵנִי הַחֲתִי הַפְּרָזִי
הַיְבוּסִי הָעַמְנִי הַמֹּאבִי הַמִּצְרִי וְהָאֲמֹרִי: ב כִּי-
נִשְׂאוּ מִבְּנֹתֵיהֶם לָהֶם וּלְבָנֵיהֶם וְהִתְעַרְבוּ זָרַע
הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת וַיֵּד הַשָּׂרִים וְהַסֹּגְנִים הֵיחָה
בְּמַעַל הַזֶּה רֵאשׁוֹנָה: {ס}

ג וּכְשָׁמְעִי אֶת-הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה קָרַעְתִּי אֶת-בְּגָדִי
וּמְעִילִי וְאָמַרְטָה מִשְׁעַר רֵאשִׁי וּזְקָנִי וְאִשְׁבָּה
מִשׁוּמָם: ד וְאֵלַי יֹאסְפוּ כָּל חָרָד בְּדַבְרֵי אֱלֹהֵי-
יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל מַעַל הַגּוֹלָה וְאֲנִי יֹשֵׁב מִשׁוּמָם עַד
לְמִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב: ה וּבְמִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב קָמַתִי מִתַּעֲנִיתִי
וּבְקָרְעֵי בְּגָדִי וּמְעִילִי וְאִכְרַעַה עַל-בְּרַכְיָי וְאִפְרַשָּׁה
כַּפֵּי אֶל-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי: ו וְאָמַרְהָ אֱלֹהֵי בְּשֵׁתִי
וְנִכְלַמְתִּי לְהָרִים אֱלֹהֵי פָנַי אֵלֶיךָ כִּי עֹנֵתִינוּ רַבּוֹ
לְמַעַל הָרֵאשׁ וְאִשְׁמַתְנוּ גְדֹלָה עַד לְשָׁמַיִם:

1 Once this was done, the officials approached me to say, “The people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, have not renounced the abominations of the people of the land – the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2 For, they and their sons have married some of their women. Thus, the holy race has been contaminated by the people of the land. The officials and leaders have been the worst offenders in this act of infidelity.”

3 On hearing this, I tore my clothes and my cloak; I pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down in horror. 4 All who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered round me, because of the infidelity of the exiles, while I went on sitting there in horror until the evening sacrifice. 5 At the evening sacrifice, I came out of my stupor and, falling on my knees in my torn clothes and cloak, stretched out my hands to Yahweh my God, 6 and said: “My God, I am ashamed. I blush to lift my face to you, my God. For our iniquities have increased, until they are higher than our heads, and our guilt has risen as high as heaven.

EZRA 9

¹ In place of ‘people of the land’, here following the NRSV, NETB has ‘local residents’ (as also in v. 2).

² Marriages to foreigners were once allowed (Gn 41:45, 48:5ff, Nb 12:1ff, Rt 1:4, 2S 3:3), though they are forbidden in Dt 7:1–4 (see Dt 23:4ff).

³ Tearing out of the hair was a traditional way of expressing shock, disgust, or regret.

⁴ The community is called after its most distinguished part, the ‘Golah’ (‘exiles’) (4:1, 6:16, 10:6, 8, 16), identifying itself with the Remnant.

⁵ The word translated as ‘stupor’ occurs only here in the Bible; it refers to the self-abasement that accompanies religious sorrow and fasting.

⁶ Note the unusual/unexpected dagesh on the *resh* in רֵאשׁ.

ז' מִיָּמֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּאִשְׁמָה גְדֹלָה עַד הַיּוֹם
 הַזֶּה וּבַעֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ נָתַנוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מְלָכֵינוּ כַּהֲנִינוּ בְּיַד
 מְלָכֵי הָאָרְצוֹת בַּחֲרָב בְּשִׁבִי וּבַבְּזָה וּבַבְּשֹׁת פָּנִים
 כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ^ח וְעַתָּה כַּמַּעֲט־רֹגַע הִיְתָה תַּחֲנָה
 מֵאֵת | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְהִשְׁאִיר לָנוּ פְּלִיטָה וְלִתְתּוֹ-
 לָנוּ יְתֵד בְּמָקוֹם קִדְשׁוֹ לְהִאִיר עֵינֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וְלִתְתֵנוּ מַחִיָּה מֵעַט בְּעַבְדַּתְנוּ: ^ט כִּי־עַבְדִּים אֲנַחְנוּ
 וּבְעַבְדַּתְנוּ לֹא עֲזַבְנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַיִּטְעֵלֵינוּ חֶסֶד לְפָנָי
 מְלָכֵי פָּרַס לְתֵת־לָנוּ מַחִיָּה לְרוֹמִם אֶת־בַּיִת
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ וּלְהַעֲמִיד אֶת־חֲרֻבְתּוֹ וְלִתְתֵלָנוּ גְדֹר
 בַּיהוּדָה וּבִירוּשָׁלַם: {ס}

י' וְעַתָּה מֵה־נֹּאמֵר אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַחֲר־יְזַאת כִּי עֲזַבְנוּ
 מִצְוֹתֶיךָ: ^א אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָ בְּיַד עַבְדֶּיךָ הַנְּבִיאִים לֵאמֹר
 הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם בָּאִים לְרִשְׁתָּהּ אָרֶץ נְדָה הִיא
 בְּנִדַת עַמֵּי הָאָרְצוֹת בְּתוֹעֲבֹתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר מְלֹאוּ
 מִפֶּה אֶל־פֶּה בְּטִמְאַתֶּם: ^ב וְעַתָּה בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם אֶל־
 תִּתְּנוּ לְבָנֵיהֶם וּבְנֹתֵיהֶם אֶל־תִּשְׂאוּ לְבָנֵיכֶם וְלֹא־
 תִּדְרְשׁוּ שְׁלָמָם וְטוֹבָתָם עַד־עוֹלָם לְמַעַן תִּחְזְקוּ

⁷ “From the days of our ancestors until now, we have been deeply guilty and, because of our iniquities, we, our kings, and our priests, have been handed over to the kings of other countries, to the sword, to captivity, to pillage, to shame, as is the case today. ⁸ Now, for a brief moment, the favour of Yahweh our God has allowed a remnant of us to escape and given us a stable home in his holy place, so that our God can raise our spirits and revive us a little in our slavery. ⁹ For we are slaves; but God has not forgotten us in our slavery; he has extended his faithful love to us even under the kings of Persia and revived us to rebuild the Temple of our God, restore its ruins and provide us with a refuge in Judah and Jerusalem.

¹⁰ “Now, our God, what can we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments, ¹¹ which you gave through your servants the prophets in these terms, “The land that you are entering is an unclean land, polluted by the people of the land and their abominations, which have filled it with their filth from end to end. ¹² Hence, do not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, if you want to grow stronger, to live off

⁷ The Chronicler includes ‘until now’ because they were still subject to Persia (v. 9).

⁸ The NRSV has ‘he’ in place of ‘our God’. On the use of the word ‘remnant’, see vv. 13–15, Zc 8:12, Is 28:5.

⁹ The literal translation of ‘rebuild’ is ‘cause to stand’.

¹⁰ In place of ‘forsaken’, here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘abandoned’.

¹¹ The passage quoted here does not exist in any extant prophetic writings but see Lv 18:24–30 and Dt 7:3.

¹² In place of ‘and never seek their peace or prosperity’ (as the NRSV), the NJB has ‘or ever concern yourself about peace or good relations with them’.

וּאֲכַלְתֶּם אֶת־טוֹב הָאָרֶץ וְהוֹרַשְׁתֶּם לְבָנֵיכֶם עַד־
עוֹלָם: ¹³ וְאַחֲרַי כָּל־הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂינוּ הָרָעִים
וּבְאֲשַׁמְתָּנוּ הַגְּדֹלָה כִּי אֵתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חָשַׁכְתָּ
לְמַטָּה מֵעוֹנָנוּ וְנִתְתָּה לָנוּ פְּלִיטָה כְּזֹאת: ¹⁴ הַנְּשׁוּב
לְהַפְּרֵ מִצְוֹתֶיךָ וּלְהִתְחַתֵּן בְּעַמֵּי הַתַּעֲבוֹת הָאֵלֶּה
הֲלוֹא תִאֲנַף־בָּנוּ עַד־כָּלָּה לְאִין שְׂאֲרִית
וּפְלִיטָה: {פ}

¹⁵ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל צַדִּיק אַתָּה כִּי־נִשְׂאָרְנוּ
פְּלִיטָה כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הִנְנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּאֲשַׁמְתִּינוּ כִּי אֵין
לְעִמּוֹד לְפָנֶיךָ עַל־זֹאת: {פ}

the fat of the land and bequeath it to your sons forever.” ¹³ After all that has befallen us because of our evil deeds and our deep guilt – though you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and have allowed us to escape like this – ¹⁴ are we to break your commandments again and intermarry with people with these abominations? Would you not be enraged with us to the point of destroying us, leaving neither remnant nor survivor?

¹⁵ “Yahweh, God of Israel, you are upright. We survive only as the remnant we are today. Behold! We come before you in our guilt; because of it we cannot stand in your presence.”

¹³ For this verse, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB reads, “Everything that has happened to us has come about because of our wicked actions and our great guilt. Even so, our God, you have exercised restraint toward our iniquities and have given us a remnant such as this.”

¹⁴ The NJB has ‘disgusting practices’ in place of ‘abominations’, here following NETB.

¹⁵ God’s justice is tempered with mercy, or else no one would survive. This is God’s saving justice (see Is 56:1, Rm 1:17).

רות פרק י

EZRA 10

א וכהתפלל עזרא וכהתודתו בכה ומתנפל לפני בית האלהים נקבצו אליו מישראל קהל רב-מאד אנשים ונשים וילדים כייבכו העם הרבה-בכה: {ס} ב ויען שכניה בן-יחיאל מבני עולם עילם ויאמר לעזרא אנחנו מעלנו באלהינו ונשב נשים נכריות מעמי הארץ ועתה יש-מקוה לישראל על-זאת: ג ועתה נכרת-ברית לאלהינו להוציא כל-נשים והנולד מהם בעצת אדני והחרדים במצות אלהינו וכתורה יעשה: ד קום כיעליך הדבר ואנחנו עמך חזק ועשה: {פ} ה ויקם עזרא וישבע את-שרי הכהנים הלויים וכל-ישראל לעשות כדבר הזה וישבעו: ו ויקם עזרא מלפני בית האלהים וילך אל-לשכת יהוחנן בן-אלישיב וילך שם לחם לא-אכל ומים לא-שתה כי מתאבל על-מעל הגולה: {ס}

1 When Ezra, weeping and prostrating himself in front of the Temple of God, was praying and making confession, a very large crowd of Israelite men, women, and children gathered round him, and they wept bitterly. 2 Shecaniah son of Jehiel, of the sons of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, "We have broken faith with our God by marrying foreign women from the people of the land. Yet, despite this, there is hope for Israel. 3 We will make a covenant with our God to send away all these wives and their children according to the advice of my lord and of those who fear the commandment of our God. Let us act according to the Law. 4 Go ahead, do your duty; we support you. Be brave, take action!" 5 Then Ezra stood up and made the leading priests and Levites and all Israel swear to do what had been said. They swore. 6 Ezra then left his place in front of the Temple of God and went to the room of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, where he went without eating food or drinking water, because he was still in mourning over the exiles' infidelity.

EZRA 10

¹ The literal translation of 'wept bitterly' (here following the NRSV - NETB has 'wept loudly') is 'wept with much weeping'.

² In place of עולם ('eternity'), here following the *Ketiv*; the *Qere* has עילם ('marrying'), as do the LXX (*ἐκαθίσταμεν*), *Peshitta*, *Vg* and many other medieval MSS.

³ The *NJB*, following 1Es 8:90, has 'the foreign wives' in place of 'these wives'.

⁴ For the last sentence, here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* reads, "be strong and do it."

⁵ In place of 'made ... swear' and 'swore', here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* has, respectively, 'put ... on oath' and 'took the oath'.

⁶ The *NRSV* and *NJB*, following 1Es 9:2, have 'where he spent the night' in place of 'where he went'. 'Jehohanan' was grandson of Eliashib, the High Priest, and himself became High Priest under Darius II.

ז וַיַּעֲבִירוּ קוֹל בְּיְהוּדָה וּבְיִרוּשָׁלַם לְכָל בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה לְהִקְבֹּץ יְרוּשָׁלַם: ח וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָבֹא לְשִׁלְשֶׁת הַיָּמִים כַּעֲצַת הַשָּׂרִים וְהַזְקֵנִים יַחֲרֵם כָּל־דְּרוֹשׁוֹ וְהוּא יִבְדֹּל מִקְהַל הַגּוֹלָה: {ס}

ט וַיִּקְבְּצוּ כָּל־אֲנָשֵׁי־יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵי־מִן יְרוּשָׁלַם לְשִׁלְשֶׁת הַיָּמִים הוּא חֹדֶשׁ הַתְּשִׁיעִי בַעֲשָׂרִים בַּחֹדֶשׁ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ כָּל־הָעָם בְּרַחוּב בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים מִרְעִידִים עַל־הַדָּבָר וּמֵהַגְּשָׁמִים: {פ}

י וַיִּקָּם עֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אַתֶּם מַעֲלֹתֶם וַתֵּשְׁבוּ נָשִׁים נְכַרְיֹת לְהוֹסִיף עַל־אֲשַׁמַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל: יא וְעַתָּה תָּנוּ תוֹדָה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־אֲבֹתֵיכֶם וַעֲשׂוּ רְצוֹנִי וְהַבְּדִלוּ מֵעַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ וּמִן־הַנְּשִׁים הַנְּכַרְיֹת: יב וַיַּעֲנוּ כָּל־הַקְּהָל וַיֹּאמְרוּ קוֹל גָּדוֹל בֵּן כְּדַבְרֵיךָ כְּדַבְּרֶךָ עָלֵינוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת: יג אָבֹל הָעָם רַב וְהָעֵת גְּשָׁמִים וְאֵין כַּח לַעֲמֹד בַּחוּץ וְהַמְּלֹאכָה לֹא־לְיוֹם אֶחָד וְלֹא לְשָׁנַיִם כִּי־הִרְבִּינוּ לַפֶּשַׁע בַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה: יד יַעֲמְדוּ־נָא שָׂרֵינוּ לְכָל־הַקְּהָל וְכָל אֲשֶׁר בְּעָרֵינוּ

7 A proclamation was issued throughout Judah and Jerusalem that all the exiles were to assemble in Jerusalem, ⁸ and that if they did not come within three days, by order of the officials and elders, they would forfeit all their property and be excluded from the community of the exiles.

9 As a result, all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem within the three days; it was the twentieth day of the ninth month. All the people sat down in the square in front of the Temple of God, trembling because of the matter in hand and because of the heavy rain.

10 The priest Ezra then stood up and said to them, “You have trespassed and married foreign wives, thus adding to Israel’s guilt. ¹¹ So now give thanks to Yahweh, God of your ancestors, and do his will by holding aloof from the people of the land and from foreign wives.” ¹² In ringing tones, the whole assembly answered, “Yes, our duty is to do as you say; ¹³ but there are many people here and it is the rainy season; we cannot stay out in the open; besides, this is not something that can be dealt with in one or two days, since many of us have been unfaithful over this.

¹⁴ Let our officials deputise for the whole community, and all the people

⁷ The literal translation of ‘proclamation’ is ‘voice’.

⁸ See #Lv 27:28 and #Jos 6:17.

⁹ Heavy rain was usual in Chislew (the ninth month, November – December).

¹⁰ The NJB has ‘been unfaithful’ in place of ‘trespassed’, here following the NRSV.

¹¹ In place of ‘people of the land’, here following the NRSV, NETB has ‘local residents’.

¹² The Kethib/Qere difference here would benefit from an explanation.

¹³ The literal translation for ‘it is the rainy season’ is ‘the time (is) rain showers’.

¹⁴ This verse depicts a committee of enquiry consisting of the leading men.

הַהֹשִׁיב נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת יָבֹא לְעֵתִים מְזֻמָּנִים וְעִמָּהֶם
זְקֵנֵי-עִיר וְעִיר וְשֹׁפְטֵיהָ עַד לְהֹשִׁיב חֶרֶן אֶף-
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִמָּנוּ עַד לְדַבֵּר הַזֶּה: {פ}

^{טו} אֲדָי יוֹנָתָן בֶּן-עֲשָׂהָאֵל וַיַּחֲזִיחַ בְּנֵי-תִקְוָה עִמָּדוֹ
עַל-זֹאת וּמִשְׁלָם וְשִׁבְתֵי הַלְוִי עֲזָרָם: ^{טז} וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן
בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה וַיִּבְדְּלוּ עֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן אֲנָשִׁים רָאשֵׁי
הָאֲבוֹת לְבַיִת אֲבֹתָם וְכֹלָם בְּשֵׁמוֹת וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בַּיּוֹם
אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הָעֵשִׂירִי לְדַרְיוֹשׁ הַדְּבָר: ^{יז} וַיִּכְלוּ בְּכֹל
אֲנָשִׁים הַהֹשִׁיבוּ נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת עַד יוֹם אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ
הָרֵאשִׁוֹן: {פ}

^{יח} וַיִּמְצָא מִבְּנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים אֲשֶׁר הֹשִׁיבוּ נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת
מִבְּנֵי יֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן-יֹצָדָק וְאֶחָיו מַעֲשִׂיָה וְאַלְיָעָזָר וַיְרִיב
וַגְּדַלְיָה: ^{יט} וַיִּתְּנוּ יָדָם לְהוֹצִיא נְשֵׁיהֶם וְאֲשָׁמִים
אֵיל-צֹאן עַל-אֲשָׁמָתָם: {ס}
^כ וּמִבְּנֵי אִמֶּר חֲנָנִי וְזַבְדִּיָה: {ס}
^{כא} וּמִבְּנֵי חָרָם מַעֲשִׂיָה וְאַלְיָה וְשִׁמְעִיָה וַיַּחֲזִיאוּ
וְעֻזִּיָה:

in our towns who have married foreign wives can come at stated times, accompanied by elders and judges from each town, until our God's fierce anger over this is turned away from us."

¹⁵ Only Jonathon son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah, supported by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite, were opposed to this. ¹⁶ The exiles did as had been proposed; and the priest Ezra selected the family heads of the various families, all of them by name, who began their sittings on the first day of the tenth month to look into the matter. ¹⁷ By the first day of the first month, they had dealt with all the men who had married foreign women.

¹⁸ Among the priests who were found to have married foreign wives were: Of the sons of Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah, ¹⁹ who agreed to send their wives away; their guilt offering was a ram from the flock for their guilt.

²⁰ Of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

²¹ Of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel and Uzziah.

¹⁵ The objection seems to have come from enthusiasts who though the procedure was too slow.

¹⁶ 'Selected' follows 1Es 9:16; the MT has 'were chosen'.

¹⁷ The work commenced in Tebeth (the tenth month, December-January) and was completed in Nisan (the first month, March-April).

¹⁸ Ezra's account of the dismissal of foreign wives ended with vv. 19 and 44b. The Chronicler has inserted a list of the culprits (vv. 18, 20-44a), which he may have modified on the basis of Ezr 2 - Ne 7. Some names here have been emended on the basis of 1Es and the LXX.

¹⁹ 'Guilt offering' follows 1Es 9:20 and the LXX (πλημμελείας); the MT has 'guilty ones'.

²⁰ For 'Immer' (אִמֶּר), 'Hanani' (חֲנָנִי) & 'Zebadiah' (זַבְדִּיָה), the LXX reads Εμμμηρ, Ανανι & Ζαβδδια, respectively.

²¹ For 'Harim', 'Maaseiah', 'Elijah', 'Shemaiah', 'Jehiel' & 'Uzziah', the LXX reads Ηραμ, Μασαια, Ελια, Σαμαια, Ιηλ & Οζια, respectively.

- כב ומבני פִּשְׁחֹר אֱלִיעֵינִי מַעֲשִׂיָה יִשְׁמַעְאֵל
 נְתַנְאֵל יִזְבָּד וְאֶלְעָשָׂה: {ס} 22 Of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel,
 Jozabad, and Elasah.
- כג ומן־הַלְוִיִּים יִזְבָּד וְשִׁמְעִי וְקֵלִיָּהּ הוּא קְלִיטָא
 פִּתְחִיָּה יְהוּדָה וְאֵלִיעֶזֶר: {ס} 23 Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah – that is, Kelita – Pethahiah,
 Judah, and Eliezer.
- כד ומן־הַמְּשֻׁרְרִים אֶלְיָשִׁיב וּמִן־הַשְּׂעָרִים שְׁלָלָם
 וְטֵלָם וְאוּרִי: {ס} 24 Of the singers: Eliashib and Zaccur. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum,
 Telem, and Uri.
- כה ומִיִּשְׂרָאֵל מִבְּנֵי פְרָעֹשׁ רַמְיָה וִיזִיָּה וּמַלְכִּיָּה
 וּמִיָּמִן וְאֶלְעָזָר וּמַלְכִּיָּה וּבְנֵיהֶם: {ס} 25 Of the Israelites: of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah,
 Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah, and Benaiah.
- כו ומבני עֵילָם מַתַּנְיָה זְכַרְיָה וִיחִיאֵל וְעִבְדֵי
 וִירְמוֹת וְאֵלִיָּה: {ס} 26 Of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth,
 and Elijah.
- כז ומבני זַטּוּא אֱלִיעֵנִי אֶלְיָשִׁיב מַתַּנְיָה וִירְמוֹת
 וְזַבָּד וְעִזִּיזָא: {ס} 27 Of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad,
 and Aziza.
- כח ומבני בְּבַי יְהוֹחָנָן חֲנַנְיָה זְבִי עֲתָלַי: {ס} 28 Of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.
- כט ומבני בְּנֵי מֶשֶׁלָּם מַלּוּחַ וְעַדְיָה יִשׁוּב וּשְׁאֵל
 יְרֵמוֹת וְרַמּוֹת: {ס} 29 Of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Jedaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and
 Jeremoth.

22 For 'Pashhur' (פִּשְׁחֹר), 'Elioenai' (אֱלִיעֵינִי), 'Maaseiah' (מַעֲשִׂיָּה), 'Ishmael' (יִשְׁמַעְאֵל), 'Nethanel' (נְתַנְאֵל), 'Jozabad' (יִזְבָּד) & 'Elasah' (אֶלְעָשָׂה), the LXX reads *Φασουργ, Ελιωηναι, Μασασια, Ισμαηλ, Ναθαναηλ, Ιωζαβαδ & Ηλασα*, respectively.

23 For 'Shimei' (שִׁמְעִי), 'Kelaiah' (קֵלִיָּהּ), 'Kelita' (קְלִיטָא) & 'Pethahiah' (פִּתְחִיָּה), the LXX reads *Σαμου, Κωλια, Κωλιτας & Φαθαια*.

24 The NRSV, following the MT, omits 'and Zaccur', here following the NJB & 1Es 9:24.

25 The NJB, following the MT repeats 'Malchijah' (מַלְכִּיָּהּ) in place of 'Hashabiah', here following the LXX (*Ασαβια*) and 1Es 9:26.

26 For 'Elam' (עֵילָם), 'Mattaniah' (מַתַּנְיָה), 'Abdi' (עִבְדֵי) & 'Jeremoth' (יְרֵמוֹת), the LXX reads *Ηλαμ, Μαθανια, Αβδια & Ιαριμωθ*, respectively.

27 For 'Zattu' (זַטּוּא), 'Zabad' (זָבָד) & 'Aziza' (עִזִּיזָא), the LXX has *Zαθουα, Ζαβαδ & Οζιζα*, respectively.

28 For 'Bebai' (בְּבַי), 'Zabbai' (זַבַּי) & 'Athlai' (עֲתָלַי), the LXX reads *Βαβι, Ζαβου & Οθαλι*, respectively.

29 For 'Bani' (בְּנֵי), 'Meshullam' (מֶשֶׁלָּם), 'Malluch' (מַלּוּחַ), 'Jedaiah' (עַדְיָה), 'Jashub' (יִשׁוּב) & 'Sheal' (שְׁאֵל), the LXX reads *Βανουι, Μεσουλαμ, Μαλουχ, Αθαιας, Ιασουθ & Σαλουια*, respectively. In place of יְרֵמוֹת, here following the *Ketiv* and LXX (*Πημωθ*), the *Qere* has יְרֵמוֹת ('Jeremoth').

- ל וּמִבְנֵי פַחַת מוֹאֵב עֲדָנָא וְכַלָּל בְּנֵיהַ מַעֲשִׂיָה 30 Of the sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah,
מִתַּנְיָהּ בְּצַלְאֵל וּבְנָוִי וּמְנַשֶּׁה: {ס} Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.
- לא וּבְנֵי חָרִים אֱלִיעֶזֶר יִשִּׁיָּה מַלְכִּיָּה שְׁמַעִיָּה 31 Of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah,
שְׁמַעוֹן: לב בְּנִימֵן מְלוּךְ שְׁמַרְיָה: {ס} Shimeon, 32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.
- לג מִבְנֵי חָשׁוּם מַתַּנִּי מַתַּתָּה זָבָד אֱלִיפְלֵט יִרְמִי 33 Of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet,
מְנַשֶּׁה שְׁמַעִי: {ס} Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.
- לד מִבְנֵי בְנֵי מַעְדֵי עֲמֵרָם וְאוּאֵל: {ס} 34 Of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel.
- לה בְּנֵיהַ בְּדִיָּה כְלוּהִי כְלוּהִי: לו וְנִיָּה מְרֵמוֹת 35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi, 36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,
אֱלִישִׁיב: לז מִתַּנְיָהּ מַתַּנִּי וִיעֶשׂוּ וִיעֶשִׂי: 37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jassu.
- לח וּבְנֵי וּבְנָוִי שְׁמַעִי: לט וְשַׁלְמִיָּה וְנַתָּן וְעַדִּיָּה: 38 And Bani and Binnui: Shimei, 39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiyah,
מ מִכְּנַדְבָּי שָׁשַׁי שָׂרָי: מא עֲזַרְאֵל וְשַׁלְמִיָּהּ 40 Machnadebai: Shashai, Sharai, 41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,

30 For 'Adna' (עֲדָנָא), 'Chelal' (כַּלָּל), 'Benaiah' (בְּנִיָּה), 'Maaseiah' (מַעֲשִׂיָּה), 'Mattaniah' (מִתַּנְיָהּ), 'Bezalel' (בְּצַלְאֵל), 'Binnui' (בְּנָוִי) & 'Manasseh' (מְנַשֶּׁה), the LXX reads *Eðene, Χαλληλ, Βαναια, Μασηα, Μαθανια, Βεσεληλ, Βανουι & Μανασση*, respectively.

31 For 'Harim' (חָרִים), 'Eliezer' (אֱלִיעֶזֶר), 'Isshijah' (יִשִּׁיָּה), 'Malchijah' (מַלְכִּיָּה), 'Shemaiah' (שְׁמַעִיָּה) & 'Shimeon' (שְׁמַעוֹן), the LXX has *Ηραμ, Ελιεζεθ, Ιεσσια, Μελχια, Σαμαια & Σεμεων*, respectively.

32 For 'Benjamin' (בְּנִימֵן), 'Malluch' (מְלוּךְ) & 'Shemariah' (שְׁמַרְיָה), the LXX reads *Βενιαμιν, Μαλουχ & Σαμαρια*, respectively.

33 For 'Hashum' (חָשׁוּם), 'Mattenai' (מַתַּנִּי), 'Mattattah' (מַתַּתָּה), 'Zabad' (זָבָד), 'Eliphelet' (אֱלִיפְלֵט), 'Jeremai' (יִרְמִי), 'Manasseh' (מְנַשֶּׁה) & 'Shimei' (שְׁמַעִי), the LXX reads *Ησαμ, Μαθανι, Μαθαθα, Ζαβεδ, Ελιφαλεθ, Ιεραμι, Μανασση & Σεμει*.

34 For 'Maadai' (מַעְדֵי), 'Amram' (עֲמֵרָם) & 'Uel' (אוּאֵל), the LXX reads *Μοοδι, Αμραμ & Ουηλ*, respectively.

35 For 'Benaiah' (בְּנִיָּה), 'Bedeiah' (בְּדִיָּה) & 'Cheluhi' (כְלוּהִי), following the *Kethib*, the LXX reads *Βαναια, Βαδαια & Χελια*, respectively. It is possible that the first name in the list here is corrupted text, which originally reads, 'Sons of ...' (followed by a name that has been dropped). Cf. #38.

36 For 'Vaniah' (וְנִיָּה), 'Meremoth' (מְרֵמוֹת) & 'Eliashib' (אֱלִישִׁיב), the LXX reads *Ουιεχωα, Ιεραμωθ & Ελιασιβ*, respectively.

37 For 'Mattaniah' (מִתַּנְיָהּ) & 'Mattenai' (מַתַּנִּי), the LXX reads *Μαθανια, & Μαθαναι*; the LXX omits 'Jassu' (וִיעֶשׂוּ), following the *Kethib*.

38 In place of 'And Bani and Binnui' (וּבְנֵי וּבְנָוִי), the NJB, NRSV & NETB, following the LXX (*ἐποίησαν οἱ υἱοὶ Βανουι*), have 'from the sons of Binnui'.

39 For 'Shelemiah' (שַׁלְמִיָּה), 'Nathan' (נַתָּן) & 'Adaiyah' (עַדִּיָּה), the LXX reads *Σελεμια, Ναθαν & Αδαια*, respectively.

40 For 'Machnadebai' (מִכְּנַדְבָּי), 'Shashai' (שָׁשַׁי) & 'Sharai' (שָׂרָי), the LXX reads *Μαχναδαβου, Σεσι & Σαρου*, respectively.

41 For 'Azarel' (עֲזַרְאֵל), 'Shelemiah' (שַׁלְמִיָּהּ) & 'Shemariah' (שְׁמַרְיָה), the LXX reads *Εζερηλ, Σελεμια & Σαμαρια*, respectively.

שְׁמֵרִיָּה: מִבְּשָׁלוֹם אֲמַרְיָה יוֹסֵף: {ס} 42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.

מִגְּמִבְּנֵי נְבוֹ יַעֲיָאֵל מַתְתִּיָּה זָבָד זְבִינָא יַדָּי וְיֹאֵל בְּנֵיָּה: 43 Of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

מִדְּכָל־אֵלֶּה נְשָׂאֵי נְשָׂאוֹ נָשִׁים נְכַרְיֹת וַיֵּשׁ מֵהֶם נְשִׁים וַיִּשְׁיִמוּ בָנִים: {פ} 44 All these had married foreign wives but sent them away with their children.

⁴² For 'Shallum' (שָׁלוֹם), 'Amariah' (אֲמַרְיָה) & 'Joseph' (יוֹסֵף), the LXX reads *Σαλουμ, Αμαρια & Ιωσηφ*, respectively.

⁴³ For 'Jeiel' (יַעֲיָאֵל), 'Mattithiah' (מַתְתִּיָּה), 'Zabad' (זָבָד), 'Zebina' (זְבִינָא), 'Jaddai' (יַדָּי - here following the *Qere*, where the *Kethib* has ידו), 'Joel' (יֹאֵל) & 'Benaiah' (בְּנֵיָּה), the LXX reads, respectively, *Ιηηλ, Μαθιαθια, Σεδεμ, Ζαμβινα, Ιαδαι, Ιωηλ & Βαναια*.

⁴⁴ 'Sent them away with their children' follows 1Es 9:36 (as well as the NJB & NRSV); the MT is uncertain and may have undergone corruption in the transmission process. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here may be due to a scribe misreading a (possibly small or short) *vav* as a *yod*.