
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.

רות פרק א

א וּבִשְׁנַת אֶחָת לְכוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס לְכָלוֹת דְּבַר־
יְהוָה מִפִּי יִרְמְיָה הָעֵיר יְהוָה אֶת־רוּחַ כָּרַשׁ מֶלֶךְ־
פָּרַס וַיַּעֲבֵר־קוֹל בְּכָל־מְלָכוֹתָיו וְגַם־בְּמִכְתָּב
לֵאמֹר:

ב כֹּה אָמַר כָּרַשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס כָּל מַמְלָכוֹת
הָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהוּא־פָקַד
עָלַי לְבָנוֹת־לּוֹ בֵּית בִּירוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה:
ג מִי־בְכֶם מִכָּל־עַמּוֹ יְהִי אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ וְיַעַל
לִירוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה וְיִבֶן אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:
ד וְכָל־הַנִּשְׁאָר מִכָּל־הַמְּקוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר הוּא גָר־
שָׁם יִנְשְׂאוּהוּ אֲנָשֵׁי מְקוֹמוֹ בְּכֶסֶף וּבַזָּהָב

EZRA 1

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

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. Their attitude towards the Jewish religion was no exception, the Jews perhaps enjoying a particular advantage since Yahweh, always called ‘the God of Heaven’ in official Persian documents, seems to have been equated with the supreme god Ahura-Mazda, worshipped by the Persian kings.
- 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.

וּבְרָכוֹשׁ וּבִבְהֶמָה עַם־הַנִּדְבָּה לְבֵית
הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

וַיָּקֻמוּ רָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת לַיהוּדָה וּבְנִימִן וְהַכֹּהֲנִים
וְהַלְוִיִּם לְכָל הָעִיר הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־רוּחֹו לַעֲלוֹת
לְבָנוֹת אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם: וְכָל־
סְבִיבֵתֵיהֶם חִזְקוּ בִידֵיהֶם בְּכָל־כֶּסֶף בָּזָהָב
בְּרָכוֹשׁ וּבִבְהֶמָה וּבַמִּגְדָּנוֹת לְבָד עַל־כָּל־
הַתְּנִדָּב: {ס}

וְהַמֶּלֶךְ כְּוָרֵשׁ הוֹצִיא אֶת־כָּלִי בֵית־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר
הוֹצִיא נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר מִירוּשָׁלַם וַיִּתֵּן בְּבֵית אֱלֹהֵיו:
וַיּוֹצִיאֻם כְּוָרֵשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס עַל־יַד מִתְרַדָּת הַגִּזְבָּר
וַיִּסְפְּרֵם לְשֹׁשְׁבָצָר הַנָּשִׂיא לַיהוּדָה: {ס} וְאֵלֶּה
מִסְפָּרָם אֲגָרְטָלִי זָהָב שְׁלֹשִׁים אֲגָרְטָלִי־כֶסֶף אֵלֶּף
מַחְלָפִים תְּשֻׁעָה וְעֶשְׂרִים: {ס} כְּפֹרִי זָהָב
שְׁלֹשִׁים כְּפֹרִי כֶסֶף מִשְׁנִים אַרְבַּע מְאוֹת וְעֶשְׂרֵה
כֵּלִים אֲחֵרִים אֵלֶּף: {ס}

well as voluntary offerings for the Temple of God, which is in Jerusalem.””

⁵ Then the heads of families of Judah and of Benjamin, the priests and the Levites, in fact all 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, gold, equipment, 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 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.

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’ (שֹׁשְׁבָצָר) 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 מִשְׁנִים (‘damaged’, here following the NJB) is uncertain; the noun מִשְׁנָה means ‘double’ or ‘second’. The translations reflect a diversity of approaches: ‘410 silver bowls of a second kind’ (KJV, NASV), ‘410 other silver bowls’ (NRSV) and ‘410 matching silver bowls’ (NIV); some take it as a number garbled in transmission, as reflected in the LXX: ‘two thousand’.

י^א כָּל־כֵּלִים לְזָהָב וְלַכֶּסֶף חֲמִשָּׁת אֲלָפִים וָאַרְבַּע ¹¹ In all, five thousand four hundred articles of gold and silver.
מֵאוֹת הַכֹּל הָעֹלָה שֶׁשֶׁבַּצָּר עִם הָעֲלֹת הַגּוֹלָה Sheshbazzar took all these with him when he led the exiles back from
מִבָּבֶל לִירוּשָׁלַם: {פ} Babylon to Jerusalem.

¹¹ The total number as given in the MT does not match the numbers given for the various items in v. 9. It is not clear whether the difference is due to error in textual transmission or whether the constituent items mentioned are only a selection from a longer list, in which case the total from that longer list may have been retained. The numbers provided in 1Es come much closer to agreeing with the number in Ezr 1:9–11 but this does not necessarily mean that 1Es has been better preserved here than Ezra; 1Es 2:13–15 (NRSV) says, “*The number of these was: one thousand gold cups, one thousand silver cups, twenty-nine silver censers, thirty gold bowls, two thousand four hundred ten silver bowls, and one thousand other vessels. All the vessels were handed over, gold and silver, five thousand four hundred sixty-nine, and they were carried back by Sheshbazzar with the returning exiles from Babylon to Jerusalem.*”

EZRA 2

רות פרק ב

- א ואלה | בני המדינה העלים משבי הגולה אשר הגלה נבוכדנצר מלך-בבל לבבל וישבו לירושלם ויהודה איש לעירו: ב אשר-באו עם-זרבל ישוע נחמיה שריה רעליה מרדכי בלשן מספר בגוי רחום בענה מספר אנשי עם ישראל: {ס}
- ג בני פרעש אלפים מאה שבעים ושנים: {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 בני שפטיה שלש מאות שבעים ושנים: {ס} 2 They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum and Baanah. The number of the men of Israel:
- ה בני ארח שבע מאות חמשה ושבעים: {ס} 3 The sons of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two.
- ו בני-פחת מואב לבני ישוע יואב אלפים שמנה מאות ושנים עשר: {ס} 4 The sons of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two.
- ז בני עילם אלף מאתים חמשים וארבעה: {ס} 5 The sons of Arah, seven hundred and seventy-five.
- ח בני זתוא תשע מאות וארבעים וחמשה: {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*) warrants an explanation.
- 2 After 'Reeliah', the NJB (following Ne 7:7) adds 'Nahamani'; here, we follow the MT, LXX & NRSV.
- 3 For 'Parosh' (פרעש), the LXX reads *Φορος*. Throughout this list, the literal translation of 'descendants' is 'sons'.
- 4 For 'Shephatiah' (שפטיה), the LXX reads *Σαφατια*.
- 5 For 'Arah' (ארח), the LXX reads *Hqa*.
- 6 For 'Pahath-Moab' (פחת מואב), the LXX reads *Φααθμωαβ*. The MT lacks the word 'and' between 'Jeshua' and 'Joab' (ישוע יואב), as does the LXX (*Ιησουε Ιωαβ*); here, we follow the Peshitta, NJB & NRSV.
- 7 For 'Elam' (עילם), the LXX reads *Αιλαμ*.
- 8 For 'Zattu' (זתוא), the LXX reads *Zaθova*.

ט	בְּנֵי זַכַּי שֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת וּשְׁשִׁים: {ס}	9	The sons of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty.
י	בְּנֵי בָנִי שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת אַרְבַּעִים וּשְׁנַיִם: {ס}	10	The sons of Bani, six hundred and forty-two.
יא	בְּנֵי בְבַי שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס}	11	The sons of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three.
יב	בְּנֵי עֲזָגָד אֶלֶף מֵאתִים עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁנַיִם: {ס}	12	The sons of Azgad, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two.
יג	בְּנֵי אֲדֹנִיקָם שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת שְׁשִׁים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס}	13	The sons of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six.
יד	בְּנֵי בִגְוַי אַלְפִים חֲמִשִּׁים וּשְׁשָׁה: {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 וּשְׁמֹנֶה: {ס}	16	The sons of Ater, that is to say of Hezekiah, ninety-eight.
יז	בְּנֵי בְצַי שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס}	17	The sons of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three.
יח	בְּנֵי יוֹרָה מֵאָה וּשְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר: {ס}	18	The sons of Jorah, one hundred and twelve.
יט	בְּנֵי חָשֻׁם מֵאתִים עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס}	19	The sons of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three.
כ	בְּנֵי גִבָּר תִּשְׁעִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה: {ס}	20	The sons of Gibbar, ninety-five.
כא	בְּנֵי בֵית-לָחֶם מֵאָה עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {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' (בָּנִי) 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' (אֲדֹנִיקָם) is Αδωνικαμ.

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

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' (חָשֻׁם) is Ασεμ.

²⁰ The LXX rendering of 'Gibbar' (גִּבָּר) is Γαβερ.

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

כב	אֲנָשֵׁי נֶטְפָּה 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 עֲזֻמָּת אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁנָיִם: {ס}	24	The sons of Azmaveth, forty-two.
כה	בְּנֵי קִרְיַת עָרִים כְּפִירָה וּבְאֵרוֹת שִׁבְעַת מֵאוֹת וְאַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה: {ס}	25	The sons of Kiriath-Jearim, and Chephirah and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three.
כו	בְּנֵי הָרָמָה וְגִבְעָה שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת 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 וְהַעֲי וּמֵאוֹת 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 אַחֵר אֶלֶף מֵאוֹת חֲמִשִּׁים וְאַרְבָּעָה: {ס}	31	The sons of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four.
לב	בְּנֵי חָרִם שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וְעֶשְׂרִים: {ס}	32	The sons of Harim, three hundred and twenty.

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

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

24 For 'Azmaveth' (עֲזֻמָּת), 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' (גִּבְעָה), the LXX reads, respectively, *Αραμα* & *Γαβαα*.

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

28 The LXX rendering of 'Bethel' (בֵּית-אֵל) is *Βαιθελ*, and that for 'Ai' (הַעֲי) 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 בְּנֵי־לֹד וְחַדִּיד וְאוֹנוֹ שִׁבְעַת מֵאוֹת עָשָׂרִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה: {ס}	33 The sons of Lod and Hadid and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five.
לד בְּנֵי יֶרִיחוֹ שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אַרְבָּעִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה: {ס}	34 The sons of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five.
לה בְּנֵי סִנְאָה 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 פִשְׁחֹר אֶלֶף מֵאוֹת אַרְבָּעִים וְשִׁבְעָה: {ס}	38 The sons of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred and forty-seven;
לט בְּנֵי חָרִים אֶלֶף וְשִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר: {ס}	39 The sons of Harim, one thousand and seventeen.
מ הַלְוִיִּם בְּנֵי־יֵשׁוּעַ וְקַדְמִיאֵל לְבֵנֵי הוֹדַבְיָה שִׁבְעִים וָאַרְבָּעָה: {ס}	40 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the line of Hodaviah, seventy-four.
מא הַמְשֻׁרְרִים בְּנֵי אָסָף מֵאָה עָשָׂרִים וּשְׁמֹנֶה: {פ}	41 The singers: the sons of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight.

33 For 'Lod' (לֹד), 'Hadid' (חַדִּיד) & 'Ono' (אוֹנוֹ), the LXX reads Λοδ, Αρωδ & Ωνω, respectively.

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

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

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

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

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

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

40 For 'Jeshua' (יֵשׁוּעַ), 'Kadmiel' (קַדְמִיאֵל) & 'Hodaviah' (הוֹדַבְיָה), the LXX reads Ίησοϋ, Καδμυηλ & Ωδουια, 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' (אָסָף) is Ασαφ.

מב בְּנֵי הַשְּׁעָרִים בְּנֵי־שָׁלוֹם בְּנֵי־אֶטֶר בְּנֵי־טַלְמוֹן בְּנֵי־עֲקוּב בְּנֵי חֲטִיטָא בְּנֵי שׁוּבַי הַכֹּל מֵאָה שְׁלֹשִׁים וְתִשְׁעָה: {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־חֲשׁוּפָא {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־חֲגָבָה {ס}	the sons of Hagabah,
בְּנֵי {ר} עֲקוּב: {ס}	the sons of Akkub.
מו בְּנֵי־חָגָב {ס}	46 The sons of Hagab,
בְּנֵי־שַׁלְמֵי שְׁמַלִּי {ס}	the sons of Shalmal, & 'Hanan' (חֲנָן), the LXX reads,
בְּנֵי {ר} חֲנָן: {ס}	the sons of Hanan.

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

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

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

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

46 For 'Hagab' (חָגָב), 'Shalmal' (שְׁמַלִּי - following the Qere, where the Kethib and NJB have שְׁמַלִּי/'Shamlai'), & 'Hanan' (חֲנָן), 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־פֶסַח {ס}	the sons of Paseah,
בְּנֵי {ר} בְּסִי: {ס}	the sons of Besai.
י בְּנֵי־אַסְנָה {ס}	⁵⁰ The sons of Asnah,
בְּנֵי־מְעוּנִים {ס}	the sons of the Meunites,
בְּנֵי {ר} נְפִיסִים נְפִוִּסִים: {ס}	the sons of the Nephisites.
נא בְּנֵי־בַקְבּוּק {ס}	⁵¹ The sons of Bakbuk,
בְּנֵי־חַקּוּפָא {ס}	the sons of Hakupha,
בְּנֵי {ר} חֲרָחֹור: {ס}	the sons of Harhur.
נב בְּנֵי־בַצְלֹות {ס}	⁵² The sons of Bazluth,
בְּנֵי־מְחִידָא {ס}	the sons of Mehida,
בְּנֵי {ר} חֲרָשָׁא: {ס}	the sons of Harsha.

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

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

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

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

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

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

נִגְ בְּנֵי־בָרְקוֹס {ס}	53 The sons of Barkos,
בְּנֵי־סִסְרָא {ס}	the sons of Sisera,
בְּנֵי־{ר} תִּמַּח: {ס}	the sons of Temah.
נִד בְּנֵי נָצִיחַ {ס}	54 The sons of Nezhiah,
בְּנֵי חֲטִיפָא: {ס}	the sons of Hatipha.
נִה בְּנֵי {ר} עֲבָדֵי 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.
נִי בְּנֵי־יַעֲלָה {ס}	56 The sons of Jaalah,
בְּנֵי־דַרְקוֹן {ס}	the sons of Darkon,
בְּנֵי {ר} גִּדֵּל: {ס}	the sons of Giddel.
נִי בְּנֵי שִׁפְטִיָּה	57 The sons of Shephatiah,
בְּנֵי־חַטִּיל	the sons of Hattil,
בְּנֵי {ר} פִּכְרֶת הַצְּבִיִּים {ס}	the sons of Pocereth-ha-Zebaim,
בְּנֵי אָמִי:	the sons of Ami.

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

54 The LXX rendering of 'Nezhiah' (נָצִיחַ) & '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, Ασεφρα & Φαδουρα*, respectively.

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

57 The LXX rendering of 'Shephatiah' (שִׁפְטִיָּה), 'Hattil' (חַטִּיל), 'Pocereth-ha-Zebaim' (פִּכְרֶת הַצְּבִיִּים) & '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 UXL.

נח כָּל-הַנְּתִינִים וּבְנֵי עֲבָדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת

תְּשַׁעִּים וּשְׁנָיִם: {ס}

נט וְאֵלֶּה הָעֹלִים מִתֵּל מֶלֶח תֵּל חֶרְשָׁא כְּרוּב אֲדָן
אִמֶּר וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְהַגִּיד בֵּית-אֲבוֹתָם וְזִרְעָם אִם
מִי־שְׂרָאֵל הֵם: ס בְּנֵי-דֹלְיָה בְּנֵי-טוֹבְיָה בְּנֵי נֶקוּדָא

שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת חֲמִשִּׁים וּשְׁנָיִם: {ס}

סא וּמִבְנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי חֲבִיָּה בְּנֵי הַקּוֹץ בְּנֵי בְּרוּזִי
אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִבָּנוֹת בְּרוּזִי הַגִּלְעָדִי אִשָּׁה וַיִּקְרָא עָלֶיהָ
שֵׁם: סב אֵלֶּה בִקְשׁוּ כְּתָבָם הַמְּתִיחִשִׁים וְלֹא
נִמְצְאוּ וַיִּגְאָלוּ מִן-הַכֹּהֲנָה: סג וַיֹּאמֶר הַתְּרַשָּׁתָא
לֵהֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יֵאכְלוּ מִקֹּדֶשׁ הַקֹּדֶשִׁים עַד עֹמֵד
כֹּהֵן לְאוּרִים וּלְתַמִּיִּם: סד כָּל-הַקֹּהֵל כְּאֶחָד אַרְבַּע
רְבּוֹא אֲלָפִים שְׁלֹשׁ-מֵאוֹת שָׁשִׁים: סה מְלִבְד
עֲבָדֵיהֶם וְאִמְהַתֵּיהֶם אֵלֶּה שִׁבְעַת אֲלָפִים שְׁלֹשׁ

⁵⁸ The total of the temple slaves and the sons of Solomon's slaves: three hundred and ninety-two.

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.

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 מֶלֶח), 'Tel-Harsha' (תֵּל חֶרְשָׁא), 'Cherub' (כְּרוּב), 'Addan' (אֲדָן) & 'Immer' (אִמֶּר), the LXX reads *Θελμελεθ, Θελαρησα, Χαρουβ, Ηδαν & Εμμηρ*, respectively.

⁶⁰ For 'Delaiah' (דֹּלְיָה), 'Tobiah' (טוֹבְיָה) & 'Nekoda' (נֶקוּדָא), the LXX reads *Δαλαια, Τωβια & Νεκωδα*, and adds *υἱοὶ Βοβα* after 'Delaiah'.

⁶¹ For 'Habaiah' (חֲבִיָּה), 'Hakkoz' (הַקּוֹץ) & 'Barzillai' (בְּרוּזִי), the LXX reads, respectively, *Χαβια, Ακουζ & Βερζελλαι*.

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

⁶³ 'His Excellency' (תְּרַשָּׁתָא) 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 וְלָהֶם מְשֻׁרָּרִים וּמְשֻׁרָּוֹת
מֵאֲתָיִם: ^{סו} סוּסֵיהֶם שִׁבְעַת מֵאֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשֵׁשׁ
פָּרָדִיִּהֶם מֵאֲתָיִם אַרְבָּעִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה: ^{סז} גְּמֻלֵיהֶם
אַרְבַּע מֵאֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וַחֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִרִים שֵׁשֶׁת
אַלְפִים שִׁבְעַת מֵאֹת וְעֶשְׂרִים: {פ}

^{סח} וּמֵרָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת בְּבֹאֵם לְבֵית יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר
בִּירוּשָׁלַם הִתְנַדְּבוּ לְבֵית הָאֱלֹהִים לְהַעֲמִידוֹ עַל־
מְכוֹנָו: ^{סט} כָּכֶם נָתַנוּ לְאוֹצַר הַמְּלָאכָה זֶה
דְּרַכְמוֹנִים שִׁשְׁרִבָּאוֹת וְאַלְף {ס} וְכֶסֶף מִנִּים
חֲמִשָּׁת אַלְפִים וְכִתְנַת כֹּהֲנִים מֵאָה: {ס} וַיֵּשְׁבוּ
הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וּמִן־הָעָם וְהַמְשֻׁרָּרִים 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 arrived at the Temple of Yahweh 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 one 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.

EZRA 3

רות פרק ג

- א וַיָּגַע הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָרֵים {ס} וַיֵּאָסְפוּ הָעָם כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַם: {ס}
- ב וַיָּקָם יֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן־יֹצָדָק וְאַחֵיו הַכֹּהֲנִים וְזֶרֻבָבֶל בֶּן־שַׁאֲלֻיָּאל וְאַחֵיו וַיִּבְנוּ אֶת־מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַעֲלֹת עָלָיו עֹלֹת כַּכָּתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים: ג וַיִּכְנֶנוּ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עַל־מְכוֹנָתָיו כִּי בְּאִמָּה עָלִיָּהֶם מַעֲמֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת וַיַּעַל וַיַּעֲלוּ עָלָיו עֹלֹת לַיהוָה עֹלֹת לִבְקָר וְלָעֶרֶב: ד וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־חַג הַסִּכּוֹת כַּכָּתוּב וְעַלֹת יוֹם בְּיוֹם בְּמִסְפָּר כְּמִשְׁפַּט דְּבַר־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ: ה וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן עָלְתָּ תָמִיד וּלְחֻדָּשִׁים וּלְכָל־מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה הַמִּקְדָּשִׁים 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 לַהֲעֵלוֹת
עֹלוֹת לִיהוָה וְהִיכֵל יְהוָה לֹא יִסָּד: ^ז וַיִּתְּנוּ כֶסֶף
לַחֲצָבִים וְלַחֲרָשִׁים וּמֵאֲכָל וּמִשְׁתֶּה וּשְׁמֵן לַצִּדְדִּים
וּלְצָרִים לְהָבִיא עֲצֵי אֲרָזִים מִן־הַלְּבָנוֹן אֲלֵי־יָפוֹא
כְּרִשְׁיוֹן כּוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרֶס עֲלֵיהֶם: {פ}

^ח וּבִשְׁנֵה הַשְּׁנִית לְבֹאֵם אֶל־בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים
לִירוּשָׁלַם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי הֵחֵלוּ זְרֻבָבֶל בֶּן־
שָׁאֲלִיָּאֵל וַיִּשׁוּעַ בֶּן־יֹצָדָק וּשְׂאָר אַחֵיהֶם |
הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְכָל־הַבָּאִים מִהַשְּׁבִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
וַיַּעֲמִדוּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמַעְלָה
לְנֹצֵחַ עַל־מְלָאכֶת בֵּית־יְהוָה: {פ}

^ט וַיַּעֲמֵד יִשׁוּעַ בֶּן־יֹאחִי וְקַדְמִיאֵל וּבְנָיו בְּנֵי־
יְהוּדָה כְּאֶחָד לְנֹצֵחַ עַל־עֲשֵׂה הַמְּלָאכָה בְּבֵית
הָאֱלֹהִים {ס} בְּנֵי חֲנָדָד בְּנֵיהֶם וְאַחֵיהֶם הַלְוִיִּם:
^י וַיִּסְדּוּ הַבָּנִים אֶת־הִיכָל יְהוָה וַיַּעֲמִידוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים
מְלִבָּשִׁים בַּחֲצִצְרוֹת וְהַלְוִיִּם בְּנֵי־אַסָּף בְּמִצְלֹתֵים
לְהַלֵּל אֶת־יְהוָה עַל־יְדֵי דָוִיד מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{יא} וַיַּעֲנוּ
בְּהַלֵּל וּבְהוֹדֹת לִיהוָה כִּי טוֹב כִּי־לַעֲוֹלָם 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 בֵּית־יְהוָה:

{ס}

יב וְרַבִּים מֵהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְרָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת הַזִּקְנִים
אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת הָרִאשׁוֹן בִּיסְדּוֹ זֶה הַבַּיִת
בְּעֵינֵיהֶם בָּכִים בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל וְרַבִּים בְּתְרוּעָה
בְּשִׂמְחָה לְהַרִים קוֹל: יג וְאֵין הָעָם מְכִירִים קוֹל
תְּרוּעַת הַשִּׂמְחָה לְקוֹל בְּכִי הָעָם כִּי הָעָם מְרִיעִים
תְּרוּעָה גְדוֹלָה וְהַקּוֹל 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.”

EZRA 4

רות פרק ד

^א וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ צָרֵי יְהוּדָה וּבִנְיָמִן כִּי־בִנְיָ הַגּוֹלָה בּוֹנִים הֵיכַל לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ב וַיָּגִשׁוּ אֶל־זִרְבָּבֶל וְאֶל־רָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהֶם נִבְנֶה עִמָּכֶם כִּי כָכֶם נִדְרֹשׁ לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם וְלֹא וְלֹא | אֲנַחְנוּ זִבְחִים מִימֵי אֶסֶר חֹדֶן מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר הַמַּעֲלָה אֶתְנוּ פָּה: ^ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהֶם זִרְבָּבֶל וַיִּשׁוּעַ וְשָׂאֵר רָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־לָכֶם וְלָנוּ לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת לֵאלֹהֵינוּ כִּי אֲנַחְנוּ יָחַד נִבְנֶה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּנוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ כּוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרְס: ^ד וַיְהִי עַם־הָאָרֶץ מִרְפִּים יָדֵי עַם־יְהוּדָה וּמִבְלֵהִים וּמִבְהִלִּים אוֹתָם לִבְנוֹת: ^ה וְסוֹכְרִים 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 where 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 αὐτοῖς), 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) warrants 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 (אַחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ – the NJB uses the name ‘Xerxes’) began at the end of 486 or the beginning of 485 BCE.

וּבְמַלְכוּת אַחֲשֻׁרְוֹשׁ בְּתַחֲלַת מַלְכוּתוֹ כָּתְבוּ
שְׁטָנָה עַל־יִשְׁבֵּי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם: {ס}

וּבְיָמֵי אֲרֻתַחֲשֵׁשְׁתָּא כָּתַב בְּשָׁלֻם מִתְרַדַת טַבְאֵל
וְשָׂאֵר כְּנוֹתוֹ עַל־אֲרֻתַחֲשֵׁשְׁתָּא מִלֶּךְ פָּרַס וְכָתַב
הַנִּשְׁתָּוֶן כְּתוּב אֲרָמִית וּמִתְרַגָּם אֲרָמִית: {פ}

ח רְחוּם בְּעַל־טַעַם וְשִׁמְשַׁי סִפְרָא כָּתְבוּ אֲגָרָה
חֲדָה עַל־יְרוּשָׁלַם לְאֲרֻתַחֲשֵׁשְׁתָּא מֶלֶכָא כְּנַמָּא:

ט אֲדִין רְחוּם בְּעַל־טַעַם וְשִׁמְשַׁי סִפְרָא וְשָׂאֵר
כְּנוֹתָהוֹן דִּינִיָּא וְאַפְרַסְתְּכִיָּא טְרַפְלִיָּא
אַפְרַסִּיָּא אֲרַכּוּי אֲרַכּוּיָּא בַבְלִיָּא שׁוֹשְׁנִכִּיָּא
דְּהוּא דְּהִיָּא עַלְמִיָּא: וְשָׂאֵר אֲמִיָּא דִּי הַגְּלִי
אַסְנַפֵּר רַבָּא וְיִקְרִיא וְהוֹתֵב הֶמוֹ בְּקִרְיָה דִּי
שְׁמֵרִין וְשָׂאֵר עַבְר־נְהָרָה וְכַעֲנָת:

יא דְּנָה פֶּרֶשְׁגֶּן אֲגָרָתָא דִּי שְׁלַחוּ עֲלוּהִי

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 (אַרְתַּחְשֵׁשׁ) is Artaxerxes I (464–423 BCE). The NJB omits ‘Bishlam’ (בְּשָׁלֻם), following the MT & NRSV; the LXX takes this word as a prepositional phrase (ἐν εἰρήνῃ – ‘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 The Kethib/Qere differences here warrant explanation; in the latter, it seems the Kethib (‘that is’) is better than the Qere (‘Dehayē’, 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 (אַסְנַפֵּר), has ‘Osnappar’ in place of ‘Ashurbanipal’, here following the NJB & NETB; he reigned 668–630 BCE.

¹¹ The Kethib/Qere difference here warrants 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־אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׁתָּא מִלְכָּא עבְדִּיךְ עבְדִּיךְ אֲנִשׁ
 עַבְר־נְהֶרָה וְכַעֲנַת: {פ}
 יִבִּי יָדִיעַ לְהוּא לְמִלְכָּא דִּי יְהוּדִיא דִּי סִלְקוּ מִן־
 לִוְתָּךְ עֲלִינָא אֲתוּ לִירוּשָׁלַם קְרִיתָא מְרֻדָּתָא
 וּבְאַיִשְׁתָּא בְנִין וְשׁוּרִי וְשׁוּרִיא אֲשַׁכְּלִלוּ
 שְׁכָלִילוּ וְאַשִּׁיא יַחֲסִיטוּ: יִכְעֹן יָדִיעַ לְהוּא
 לְמִלְכָּא דִּי הֵן קְרִיתָא דָּךְ תִּתְּבַנָּא וְשׁוּרִיא
 יִשְׁתְּכַלְלֹן מִנְדָּה־בְלוּ וְהִלָּךְ לֹא יִנְתָּנוּ
 וְאַפְתָּם מְלָכִים תִּהְנֹק: יִכְעֹן כָּל־קִבְלָ דִּי־
 מֶלֶךְ הֵיכְלָא מְלַחְנָא וְעֲרוֹת מִלְכָּא לֹא אֲרִי־
 לָנָא לְמַחְזָא עַל־דְּנָה שְׁלַחְנָא וְהוֹדַעְנָא
 לְמִלְכָּא: טו דִּי יִבְקֹר בְּסַפֵּר־דְּכַרְנִיא דִּי
 אֲבָהָתְךָ וְתִהְשַׁכַּח בְּסַפֵּר דְּכַרְנִיא וְתִנְדַּע דִּי
 קְרִיתָא דָּךְ קְרִיא מְרֻדָּא וּמִהֲנֹקַת מְלָכִין
 וּמִדְּנִין וְאַשְׁתְּדוּר עַבְדִּין בְּגוּה מִן־יּוֹמַת עֲלָמָא
 עַל־דְּנָה קְרִיתָא דָּךְ הִחְרַבְתָּ: טז מִהוֹדַעִין
 אֲנַחְנָה לְמִלְכָּא דִּי הֵן קְרִיתָא דָּךְ תִּתְּבַנָּא
 וְשׁוּרִיָּה יִשְׁתְּכַלְלֹן לְקִבְלָ דְּנָה חֵלֶק בַּעֲבַר
 נְהֶרָא לֹא אִיתִי לָךְ: {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 warrants 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"ח נשתונא די שלחתון עלינא מפרש קרי
קדמי: יט ומנז שים טעם ובקרו והשפחו די
קרייתא דך מזיומת עלמא על־מלכין
מתנשאה ומרד ואשתדור מתעבד־בה:
כ ומלכין תקיפין הון על־ירושלם ושליטין
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 הון שלו למעבד על־דנה
למה ישגא חבלא להנזקת מלכין: {ס}

כג אדן 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 (βααλταμ), Peshitta & NJB.

אָזָלוּ בְּהִילּוֹ לִירוּשָׁלַם עַל־יְהוּדִיָּא וּבָטְלוּ הֵמוּ
בְּאַדְרַע וַחֲחִיל: {ס} hurried to the Jews in Jerusalem and stopped their work by force of arms.

כִּד בְּאַדִּין בְּטִלַת עֲבִידַת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵא דֵי בִירוּשָׁלַם
וְהָיָה בְּטָלָא עַד שְׁנַת תַּרְתִּין לְמַלְכוּת דְּרִיּוֹשׁ
מֶלֶךְ־פָּרַס: {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.

EZRA 5

רות פרק ה

- א וְהַתְנַבִּי חַגִּי נְבִיאָה נְבִיאַ וְזַכְרְיָה בֶרֶעְדּוֹא נְבִיאִיא עַל־יְהוּדִיא דִּי בִיהוּד וּבִירוּשָׁלַם בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲלֵיהוֹן: {ס}
- ב בְּאֲדִין קָמוּ זִרְבָּבֶל בֶּרֶשָׁאֲלִתִּיאֵל וִישׁוּעַ בֶּר־יֹצֵדֶק וּשְׂרָיו לְמִבְנָא בֵּית אֱלֹהָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְעִמָּהוֹן נְבִיאִיא דִּי־אֱלֹהָא מְסַעְדִּין לְהוֹן: {פ}
- ג בְּה־זְמַנָּא אָתָּה עֲלִיהוֹן תַּתְנִי פַחַת עֲבֶר־נְהָרָה וְשֶׁתֶּר בּוֹזְנֵי וּכְנֻתָּהוֹן וְכֹן אֲמָרִין לָהֶם מִן־שֵׁם לָכֶם טַעֲם בֵּיתָא דְנָה לְבָנָא וְאֲשֶׁרְנָא דְנָה לְשַׁכְּלָלָה: {ס}
- ד אֲדִין כְּנָמָא אֲמָרְנָא לָהֶם מִן־אֲנֹן שְׁמָהּת גְּבִרְיָא דִּי־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 warrants 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’ (תַּתְנִי) appears in cuneiform tablets as governor of this province. The exact meaning of the Aramaic word אֲשֶׁרְנָא (‘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’ (אֲמָרְנָא).
- ⁵ The idiom ‘the eye of their God’ describes the attentive care that he exercises on behalf of the object of his concern.

יְהוּדִיָּא וְלֹא־בִטְלוּ הֵמוֹ עַד־טַעֲמָא לְדַרְיוֹשׁ יְהוּדָא
וְאֲדִין יְתִיבֹן נִשְׁתַּנָּא עַל־דְּנָה: {פ}

יִפְרִשְׁגֵּן אֲגַרְתָּא דִּי־שִׁלַּח תַּתְּנִי | פָּתַח עֲבַר־נְהִרָה
וְשִׁתֵּר בּוֹזַנִי וְכִנְוֹתָהּ אֲפִרְסְכִיָּא דִּי בַעֲבַר נְהִרָה
עַל־דַּרְיוֹשׁ מַלְכָּא: יִפְתַּגְמָא שְׁלַחוּ עֲלוּהִי וְכִדְנָה
כְּתִיב בְּגוֹה

לְדַרְיוֹשׁ מַלְכָּא שְׁלָמָא כָּלָא: {ס}
ח יָדִיעַ | לְהוּא לְמַלְכָּא דִּי־אַזְלָנָא לִיהוּד
מְדִינַתָּא לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵא רַבָּא וְהוּא מִתְבַּנָּא
אַבְן גָּלִל וְאֵעַ מִתְשֵׁם בְּכַתְלִיא וְעִבִידְתָּא דְּךָ
אַסְפְּרָנָא מִתְעַבְדָּא וּמִצְלַח בִּידְהֵם: {ס}
ט אֲדִין שְׁאַלְנָא לְשַׁבִּיָּא אֱלֹךְ כְּנַמָּא אֲמַרְנָא
לְהֵם מִן־שֵׁם לָכֵם טַעֲם בֵּיתָא דְּנָה לְמִבְנֵיהּ
וְאַשְׁרָנָא דְּנָה לְשַׁכְלָלָהּ: יִואִף שְׁמַהֲתָהֶם
שְׁאַלְנָא לְהֵם לְהוֹדְעוֹתָךְ דִּי נִכְתָּב שֵׁם־
גְּבַרְיָא דִּי בְּרָאִשִׁיהֶם: {ס}
א וְכִנְמָא פִּתְגָמָא הִתִּיבֹנָא לְמַמַּר אֲנַחְנָא
הֵמוֹ עַבְדוּהִי דִּי־אַלֵּה שְׁמִיָּא וְאַרְעָא וּבְנִין

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־הָוּא בְּנָה מִקְדָּמַת דְּנָה שְׁנִין שְׁגִיָּאן
וּמְלִךְ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל רַב בְּנָהי וּשְׁכַלְלָהּ: י"ב לְהֵן מִן־
דִּי הִרְגִּזוּ אֲבָהֵתְנָא לְאַלְהָ שְׁמִיָּא יְהִב הֶמוּ
בְּיַד נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל כְּסָדִיא כְּסָדָא
וּבֵיתָה דְּנָה סִתְרָה וְעַמָּה הִגְלִי לְבָבֶל: {ס}
י"ג בְּרַם בְּשַׁנַּת חֲדָה לְכוּרֶשׁ מֶלְכָּא דִּי בָבֶל
כוּרֶשׁ מֶלְכָּא שֵׁם טַעֲם בֵּית־אַלְהָא דְּנָה
לְפָנָא: יד וְאַף מֵאֲנִיָּא דִּי־בֵית־אַלְהָא דִּי
דִּהְבָּה וְכֶסֶף דִּי נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר הִנְפִּק מִן־
הֵיכְלָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְהֵיבֵל הֶמוּ לְהֵיכְלָא דִּי
בָּבֶל הִנְפִּק הֶמוּ כוּרֶשׁ מֶלְכָּא מִן־הֵיכְלָא דִּי
בָּבֶל וְהֵיבֹו לְשִׁשְׁבַּצָר שְׁמָה דִּי פַחַה שְׁמָה:
טו וְאַמְרָ־לָהּ | אֵלֶּה אֵל מֵאֲנִיָּא שָׂא אֲזֹל־
אַחַת הֶמוּ בְּהֵיכְלָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וּבֵית אֱלֹהָא
יִתְבְּנָא עַל־אַתְרָהּ: {ס}
טז אֲדִין שִׁשְׁבַּצָר דָּךְ אֲתָא יְהִב אֲשִׁיָּא דִּי־בֵית
אַלְהָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וּמִן־אֲדִין וְעַד־כַּעַן
מִתְבְּנָא וְלֹא שָׁלַם:

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 warrants 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.

וְכַעֲן הֵן עַל־מַלְכָּא טָב יִתְבַּקֵּר בְּבֵית גְּנוּזֵיָא דִּי־
מַלְכָּא תִּמָּה דִּי בְּבַבְלֵהֵן אִיתִי דִּי־מִן־כּוֹרֶשׁ מַלְכָּא
שִׁים טַעֲם לְמַבְנָא בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵא דָּד בִּירוּשָׁלַם
וְרַעוּת מַלְכָּא עַל־דִּנְהָ 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'.

EZRA 6

רות פרק ו

^א בַּאֲדִין דְּרִיּוֹשׁ מַלְכָּא שָׁם טַעַם וּבְקֶרֶו | בְּבֵית סַפְרִיא דִּי גִנְזִיא מֵהַחֲתִין תָּמָּה בְּבָבֶל: ^ב וְהִשְׁתַּכַּח בְּאַחְמֶתָא בְּבִירְתָּא דִּי בְּמַדִּי מְדִינַתָּא מְגִלָּה חֲדָה וְכֹן־פְּתִיב בְּגֹוָה

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:

דְּכְרֹנָה: {פ}

^ג בְּשָׁנָת חֲדָה לְכוֹרֶשׁ מַלְכָּא פּוֹרֶשׁ מַלְכָּא שָׁם טַעַם בֵּית־אֱלֹהָא בִּירוּשָׁלַם בֵּיתָא יִתְבָּנָא אֶתְרִי דִּי־דְבַחִין דְּבַחִין וְאֲשׁוּהִי מְסֻבְלִין רוּמָה אֲמִין שְׁתִּין פְּתִיָּה אֲמִין שְׁתִּין: ^ד נְדָבְכִין דִּי־אֲבָן גָּלִל תְּלָתָא וְנִדְבָךְ דִּי־אֶעֱ חֲדָת וְנִפְקָתָא מִן־בֵּית מַלְכָּא תַתִּיהָב: ^ה וְאֶף מֵאֲנִי בֵּית־אֱלֹהָא דִּי דֶּהֱבָה וְכֶסֶפָּא דִּי נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר הִנְפִּיק מִן־הֵיכְלָא דִּי־בִירוּשָׁלַם וְהֵיכֵל לְבָבֶל יִהְיֶה וְיִהְיֶה לְהֵיכְלָא דִּי־בִירוּשָׁלַם לְאַתְרָהּ וְתַחַת בְּבֵית אֱלֹהָא: {ס}

“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 (εἷς); the MT has ‘new’ (חֲדָתָא). 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)

י כֶּעַן תִּתְּנִי פַחַת עֲבֶר־נְהָרָה שְׂתֵר בּוֹזְנִי
 וּכְנֻתָּהוֹן אֶפְרַסְכִּיא דִּי בַעֲבֵר נְהָרָה רַחִיקִין
 הֵוּן מִן־תַּמָּה: ז שְׁבִקוּ לַעֲבִידַת בֵּית־אֱלֹהָה
 דָּךְ פַּחַת יְהוּדִיא וּלְשָׁבִי יְהוּדִיא בֵּית־אֱלֹהָה
 דָּךְ יִבְנוּן עַל־אַתְרָה: ח וּמִנִּי שָׁיִם טַעַם לְמָא
 דִּי־תַעֲבִדוּן עִם־שָׁבִי יְהוּדִיא אֱלָךְ לְמִבְנָא
 בֵּית־אֱלֹהָה דָּךְ וּמִנְכְּסֵי מַלְכָּא דִּי מַדַּת עֲבֵר
 נְהָרָה אֶסְפְּרָנָא נִפְקֶתָא תְּהוּא מִתִּיהָבָא
 לְגַבְרִיא אֱלָךְ דִּי־לֹא לְבַטְלָא: ט וּמָה חֲשָׁן
 וּבְנֵי תוֹרִין וְדַכְרִין וְאַמְרִין | לַעֲלוֹן | לְאֵלָה
 שְׁמִיא חֲנֻטִין מֶלֶךְ | חֲמֵר וּמִשָּׁח כְּמֵאמֵר
 כְּהִנֵּיא דִּי־בִירוּשָׁלַם לְהוּא מִתִּיהָב לְהֵם יוֹם
 | בְּיוֹם דִּי־לֹא שָׁלוֹ: י דִּי־לֵהוֹן מִהֶקְרָבִין
 נִיחֻזִּין לְאֵלָה שְׁמִיא וּמִצְלִין לְחַיִּי מַלְכָּא
 וּבְגֹזֵהי: יא וּמִנִּי שָׁיִם טַעַם דִּי כָּל־אִנְשֵׁי דִּי
 יִהְשָׁנָא פִּתְגָמָא דְּנָה יִתְּנֶסַח אֶע מִן־בֵּיתָה

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 עֲלֵהּ וּבֵיתָהּ נִוְלוּ יִתְעַבֵּד עַל-
 דְּנָה: י' וְאֱלֹהָא דִּי שְׁכָן שְׁמָהּ תַּמָּה יִמְגַּר כָּל-
 מֶלֶךְ וְעַם דִּי | יִשְׁלַח יָדָהּ לְהַשְׁנִיָּה לְחַבְלָהּ
 בֵּית-אֱלֹהָא דָּךְ דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם אָנָּה דְרִיּוֹשׁ
 שְׁמַת טַעַם אֶסְפְּרָנָא יִתְעַבֵּד: {פ}

י' אֲדִין תַּתְנִי פַתַּח עֲבַר-נְהֶרָה שְׁתַּר בּוּזְנִי
 וּכְנֻתָּהוֹן לִקְבֹּל דִּי-שְׁלַח דְרִיּוֹשׁ מֶלֶכָא כְּנָמָא
 אֶסְפְּרָנָא עֲבָדוּ: י' וְשְׁבִי יְהוּדִיא בְנִין וּמַצְלָחִין
 בְּנִבְוֹאת חֲגִי נְבִיאָה נְבִיא וּזְכָרִיָּה בֶר-עֲדוּא וּבְנוֹ
 וְשִׁכְלָלוּ מִן-טַעַם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִטַּעַם כּוֹרֶשׁ
 וְדְרִיּוֹשׁ וְאַרְתַּחשֶׁשְׁתָּא מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס: ט' וְשִׁיציָא
 בֵּיתָהּ דְּנָה עַד יוֹם תַּלְתָּהּ לִירַח אֲדָר דִּי-הִיא
 שְׁנַת-שֵׁשׁ לְמַלְכוּת דְרִיּוֹשׁ מֶלֶכָא: {פ}

ט' וְעֲבָדוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּהִנִּיא וְלוֹיָא וְשָׂאֵר בְּנֵי-
 גְלוּתָא חֲנֻכַּת בֵּית-אֱלֹהָא דְנָה בְּחֻדָּה: י" 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) warrants 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 warrants an explanation.

לְחַנֹּכֶת בֵּית־אֱלֹהִים דָּנָה תֹורִין מֵאָה דְכָרִין מֵאֲתִין
אֲמָרִין אַרְבַּע מֵאָה וּצְפִירֵי עֶזֶן לַחֲטִיא לַחֲטָאָה
עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּרִי־עֶשֶׂר לְמִנִּין שְׁבִטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
יִי וְהִקִּימוּ כֹהֲנֵיָא בְּפִלְגֵתְהוֹן וְלוֹיָא בְּמַחֲלֶקֶתְהוֹן
עַל־עֲבִידַת אֱלֹהִים דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם כְּכַתֵּב סֵפֶר
מֹשֶׁה: {פ}

יִי וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי־הַגּוֹלָה אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בְּאַרְבַּעָה עֶשֶׂר
לְחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן: כִּי הִטְהָרוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם
כָּאֶחָד כָּל־סָהוּרִים וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ הַפֶּסַח לְכָל־בְּנֵי
הַגּוֹלָה וְלֶאֱחֵיהֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים וְלָהֶם: כֹּא וַיֹּאכְלוּ בְנֵי־
יִשְׂרָאֵל הַשָּׁבִים מִהַגּוֹלָה וְכָל הַנִּבְדָּל מִטְּמֵאת גּוֹי־
הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים לְדָרֵשׁ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
כֹּב וַיַּעֲשׂוּ חֲג־מִצּוֹת שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בְּשִׂמְחָה כִּי |
שִׂמְחָם יְהוָה וְהֵסֵב לֵב מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר עֲלֵיהֶם לְחֻזֵּק
יְדֵיהֶם בְּמִלְאֶכֶת בֵּית־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.

EZRA 7

רות פרק ז

- ¹ *ואַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּמַלְכוּת אֲרַתַּחְשֶׁסְתָּא מֶלֶךְ־פָּרַס עֲזָרָא בֶן־שֵׁרְיָה בֶן־עֲזַרְיָה בֶן־חִלְקִיָּה: ² בֶּן־שְׁלֹמֹם בֶּן־צְדֹק בֶּן־אַחִיטֹוב: ³ בֶּן־אַמְרִיָּה בֶן־עֲזַרְיָה בֶן־מְרִיֹוֹת: ⁴ בֶּן־זֶרְחִיָּה בֶן־עֻזִּי בֶן־בֻּקִּי: ⁵ בֶּן־אַבִּישׁוּעַ בֶּן־פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אַלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הָרִאשׁ: ⁶ הוּא עֲזָרָא עָלָה מִבָּבֶל וְהוּא־סֹפֵר מֵהֵרַב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּיד־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עָלָיו כֹּל בַּקְּשָׁתוֹ: {פ}
- ⁷ וַיַּעֲלֵה מִבְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְהַמְשָׁרְרִים וְהַשְּׁעָרִים וְהַנְּתִינִים אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַם בְּשַׁנַּת־שֶׁבַע לְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁסְתָּא הַמֶּלֶךְ: ⁸ וַיָּבֹא
- ¹ After these events, Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, 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' (שֵׁרְיָה), 'Azariah' (עֲזַרְיָה) & 'Hilkiah' (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' (שְׁלֹמֹם), 'Zadok' (צְדֹק) & 'Ahitub' (אַחִיטֹוב) is Σαλουμ, Σαδδουκ & Αχιτωβ, respectively.
- ³ The LXX rendering of 'Amariah' (אַמְרִיָּה), 'Azariah' (עֲזַרְיָה) & 'Meraioth' (מְרִיֹוֹת) is Σαμαρια, Εσρια & Μαρερωθ, respectively.
- ⁴ The LXX rendering of 'Zerariah' (זֶרְחִיָּה), 'Uzzi' (עֻזִּי) & 'Bukki' (בֻּקִּי) is Ζαραια, Σαουια & Βοκκι, respectively.
- ⁵ The LXX rendering of 'Abishua' (אַבִּישׁוּעַ), 'Phinehas' (פִּינְחָס) & 'Eleazar' (אַלְעָזָר) is Αβισουε, Φινεες & 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 (וַיַּעֲלֵה), NJB & NRSV, NETB reads, 'he (Ezra) brought up' (וַיַּעֲלֵה), substituting the Hiphil singular for the Qal plural.
- ⁸ The 'seventh year of the reign of King Artaxerxes' was 458 BCE.

יְרוּשָׁלַם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי הָיָא שְׁנַת הַשְּׁבִיעִית
לְמֶלֶךְ: ^ט כִּי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן הוּא יָסַד
הַמַּעֲלָה מִבָּבֶל וּבְאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי בָּא אֶל־
יְרוּשָׁלַם כִּיד־אֱלֹהֵיו הַטּוֹבָה עָלָיו: ^י כִּי עֲזָרָא הָכִין
לָבָבוּ לְדָרֵשׁ אֶת־תּוֹרַת יְהוָה וּלְעֲשׂוֹת וּלְלַמֵּד
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל חֹק וּמִשְׁפָּט: {ס}

^{יא} וְזֶה | פֶּרֶשְׁגֵּן הַנִּשְׁתָּן אֲשֶׁר נָתַן הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֶת־חֲשֶׁסְתָא לְעֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן הַסֹּפֵר סֹפֵר דְּבָרֵי
מִצְוֹת־יְהוָה וַחֲקִיו עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: {פ}

^{יב} אֶת־חֲשֶׁסְתָא מֶלֶךְ מַלְכִּיא לְעֲזָרָא כְּהֵנָּא
סֹפֵר דָּתָא דִּי־אֱלֹהֵי שְׁמַיָּא גְּמִיר וּכְעֵנַת:
^{יג} מִנֵּי שְׁיָם טַעַם דִּי כָּל־מִתְנַדָּב בְּמַלְכוּתֵי מֶן־
עַמָּא יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכַהֲנוּהִי וְלוֹיָא לְמַהֲדָּ לִירוּשָׁלַם
עַמְדָּ יְהֹד: ^{יד} כָּל־קַבְּלָל דִּי מִן־קֻדְם מַלְכָּא
וְשִׁבְעַת יַעֲטָהִי שְׁלִיחַ לְבַקְרָה עַל־יְהוּד
וּלִירוּשָׁלַם בְּדַת אֱלֹהֵי דִי בִידָד: ^{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' (יָסֵד).

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 דִּי־מִלְכָּא וַיַּעֲטֹזֵהי הַתְּנַדְּבוּ לְאֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם מִשְׁכָּנָה: ^{טז} וְכָל כֶּסֶף
וְזָהָב דִּי תִהְשַׁכַּח בְּכָל מְדִינַת בָּבֶל עִם
הַתְּנַדְּבוֹת עִמָּא וְכִהְנִיָּא מִתְנַדְּבִין לְבֵית
אֱלֹהֵהֶם דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם:

י" כָּל־קֶבֶל דְּנָה אֶסְפְּרָנָא תִקְנָא בְּכֶסֶף דְּנָה
תּוֹרִין | דְּכָרִין אִמְרִין וּמִנְחָתְהוֹן וְנִסְפִּיָּהוֹן
וְתִקְרַב הַמֹּז עַל־מִדְבָּחָה דִּי בֵית אֱלֹהֵכֶם דִּי
בִירוּשָׁלַם: י" וְמָה דִּי עָלִיד עֲלִיד וְעַל־אַחָד
אֶחֶיד יִיטֵב בְּשָׂאֵר כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לְמַעַבְד
כְּרַעוֹת אֱלֹהֵכֶם תַּעֲבֹדוּן:

י" וּמֵאֲנִיָּא דִּי־מִתִּיהָבִין לָךְ לְפִלְחֹן בֵּית אֱלֹהֵךְ
הַשָּׁלַם קֹדֶם אֱלֹהֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם: י" וְשָׂאֵר חֲשׁוֹת
בֵּית אֱלֹהֵךְ דִּי יִפְלִלְךָ לְמִנְתָּן תִּנְתָּן מִן־בֵּית
גִּנְזֵי מִלְכָּא:

כ" וּמִנִּי אֲנָה אֶרְתַּחֲשַׁסְתָּא מִלְכָּא שִׁים טַעֻם
לְכָל גִּזְבָּרִיא דִּי בַעֲבָר נִהְרָה דִּי כָל־דִּי
יִשְׁאַלְנָכוּן עֲזָרָא כִּהְנָא סִפְר דָּתָא דִּי־אֱלֹהֵי

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 יִתְעַבֵּד: ^{כב} עַד־כֶּסֶף כְּכַרְזִין
מָאָה וְעַד־חֲנֻטִין כּוֹרִין מָאָה וְעַד־חֲמֹר בִּתְזִין
מָאָה וְעַד־בִּתְזִין מִשַּׁח מָאָה וּמִלַּח דִּי־לֹא
כְּתָב: ^{כג} כָּל־דִּי מִן־טַעַם אֱלֹה שְׁמִיָּא יִתְעַבֵּד
אֲדַרְזָּא לְבֵית אֱלֹה שְׁמִיָּא דִּי־לִמָּה לְהוּא
קִצֵּף עַל־מַלְכוּת מַלְכָּא וּבְנוּהִי: ^{כד} וְלָכֵן
מִהוּדְעִין דִּי כָל־כְּהֻנְיָא וְלוֹיָא זִמְרִיא תִרְעִיא
נְתִינִיא וּפְלָחִי בֵּית אֱלֹהָ דְנָה מְנַדָּה בְּלוּ
וְהִלְךְ לֹא שְׁלִיט לְמַרְמָא עֲלֵיהֶם:
^{כה} וְאַנְתָּ עֲזָרָא כְּחֻכְמַת אֱלֹהֵךְ דִּי־בִידְךָ מִנִּי
שְׁפָטִין וְדִינִין דִּי־לְהוֹן דֹּאנִין דֹּאנִין לְכָל־
עַמָּא דִּי בַעֲבָר נִהְרָה לְכָל־יְדַעֵי דְתִי אֱלֹהֵךְ
וְדִי לֹא יָדַע תְּהוּדְעוֹן: ^{כו} וְכָל־דִּי־לֹא לְהוּא
עֲבָד דְּתֵא דִי־אֱלֹהֵךְ וְדְתֵא דִּי מַלְכָּא
אֶסְפְּרָנָא דִּינָה לְהוּא מִתְעַבֵּד 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’ (קִצֵּף) 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 warrants an explanation.

הַן לְשֵׁרְשׁוֹ לְשֵׁרְשֵׁי הַן-לַעֲנֹשׁ נִכְסִין
וּלְאַסּוּרִין: {פ}

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

כִּי בָרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן כְּזֹאת בְּלִב
הַמֶּלֶךְ לִפְאֹר אֶת-בֵּית יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:
כִּחַ וְעָלִי הִטָּה-חֶסֶד לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְיוֹעֲצָיו וְלִכְל-שָׂרֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגְּבֻרִים וְאֲנִי הִתְחַזַּקְתִּי כִּיד־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
עָלִי וְאֶקְבְּצָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל רָאשִׁים לַעֲלוֹת 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 ואלה ראשי אבותיהם והתיחשם העללים עמי במלכות ארתחשסתא המלך מבבל: {ס}
- ^ב מבני פינחס גרשם {ס}
- ^ג מבני איתמר דניאל {ס}
- ^ד מבני דוד חטוש: {ס}
- ^ה מבני שכניה {ס}
- ^ו מבני פרעש זכריה ועמו התיחש לזכרים מאה וחמשים: {ס}
- ^ז מבני פחת מואב אליהועיני בן-זרחיה ועמו מאתים הזכרים: {ס}
- ^ח מבני שכניה בן-יחזיאל ועמו שלש מאות הזכרים: {ס}
- ^ט ומבני עדן עבד בן-יונתן ועמו חמשים הזכרים: {ס}
- ¹ These, with their genealogies, were the heads of families who set out from Babylon with me in the reign of King Artaxerxes:
- ² Of the sons of Phinehas: Gershom;
- of the sons of Ithamar: Daniel;
- of the sons of David: Hattush.
- ³ Of the sons of Shecaniah;
- of the sons of Parosh: Zechariah, and with him a hundred and fifty males officially registered.
- ⁴ Of the sons of Pahath-Moab: Elioenai son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males.
- ⁵ Of the sons of Zattu: Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males.
- ⁶ And of the sons of Adin: Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him 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' (גרשם), 'Ithamar' (איתמר) & 'Hattush' (חטוש), the LXX reads Γερσσωμ, 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' (שכניה) & 'Parosh' (פרעש) is Σαχαρια & Φορος, respectively.
- ⁴ The LXX rendering of 'Pahath-Moab' (פחת מואב), 'Elioenai' (אליהועיני) & 'Zerahiah' (זרחיה) is, respectively, Φααθμωαβ, Ελιανα & Ζαραια.
- ⁵ The MT lacks 'of Zattu', here following the LXX (Ζαθου), 1Es 8:32, the NJB, NRSV & NETB.
- ⁶ For 'Adin' (עדן), 'Ebed' (עבד) & 'Jonathan' (יונתן), the LXX reads Αδν, 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-יחאל 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 בבאי זכריה בן-בבאי ועמו עשרים ושמנה
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 וזבוד 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' (יחאל), the LXX reads *Ιωαβ, Αβαδια & Ιηλ*, 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' (בבאי) 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, Ιηλ & Σαμαιο*.

14 In place of '(and) Zabud', here following the Kethib (וזבוד), 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־אֶהוּא וְנַחֲנָה שָׁם
יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה וְאָבִינָה בָּעַם וּבַכֹּהֲנִים וּמִבְנֵי לֵוִי לֹא־
מָצָאתִי שָׁם: ^{טז} וְאֶשְׁלַחָה לְאַלְעָזָר לְאַרְיֵאל
לְשִׁמְעֵיָה וּלְאַלְנָתָן וּלְיָרִיב וּלְאַלְנָתָן וּלְזַכְרְיָה
וּלְמִשְׁלָם רָאשִׁים וּלְיֹזִירִיב וּלְאַלְנָתָן מְבִינִים:
^{יז} וְאוֹצֵאָה וְאַצְנָה אוֹתָם עַל־אֲדֹ הָרֹאשׁ בְּכַסְפִּיָּא
הַמָּקוֹם וְאַשְׁימָהּ בְּפִיהֶם דְּבָרִים לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדֹ
אָחִיו הַנְּתוּנִים הַנְּתִינִים בְּכַסְפִּיָּא הַמָּקוֹם לְהִבְיֵא־
לָנוּ מִשְׁרָתִים לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ^{יח} וַיָּבִיאוּ לָנוּ כִּיד־
אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַטּוֹבָה עָלֵינוּ אִישׁ שְׁכָל מִבְנֵי מַחְלֵי בֶן־
לֵוִי בֶן־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשִׁרְבִיָּה וּבְנָיו וְאָחִיו שְׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂר:
^{יט} וְאֶת־חֲשַׁבְיָה וְאֶת־יֵשַׁעִיָּה מִבְנֵי מֶרָרִי אָחִיו
וּבְנֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרִים: {ס}
^כ וּמִן־הַנְּתִינִים שֶׁנָּתַן דָּוִד וְהַשָּׂרִים לְעַבְדַּת הַלְוִיִּם
נְתִינִים מֵאֵתִים וְעֶשְׂרִים כָּלָם נִקְבְּוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת:

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 Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari with his kinsmen and sons: twenty men.

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' (אֶהוּא) 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 (ἀδελφοὺς) & 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 warrant explanation.

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 צוֹם עַל־הַנָּהָר אֲהָוָא לְהַתְעַנּוֹת
לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְבַקֵּשׁ מִמֶּנּוּ דֶּרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לָנוּ וּלְטַפָּנוּ
וּלְכָל־דְּרוֹשֵׁינוּ: כב כִּי בִשְׁתֵּי לִשְׁאוֹל מִן־הַמֶּלֶךְ חֵיל
וּפָרָשִׁים לְעֻזָּרְנוּ מֵאוֹיֵב בַּדֶּרֶךְ כִּי־אָמַרְנוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ
לֵאמֹר יִדְּ־אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל־כָּל־מִבְקָשׁוֹ לְטוֹבָה וְעֻז
וְאִפּוֹ עַל כָּל־עֲזָבָיו: כג וְנִצְוָמָה וְנִבְקָשָׁה מֵאֱלֹהֵינוּ
עַל־זֹאת וַיַּעֲתֵר לָנוּ:

כד וְאֶבְדִּילָה מִשְׁרֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר לְשִׁרְבִיָּה
חֲשִׁבְיָה וְעַמָּהֶם מֵאֲחֵיהֶם עֲשָׂרָה: כה וְאֶשְׁקֹלָה
וְאֶשְׁקֹלָה לָהֶם אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף וְאֶת־הַזָּהָב וְאֶת־הַכֶּלִים
תְּרוּמַת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַהֵרִימוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיַּעֲצִיּוּ וְשָׂרָיו
וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּמְצָאִים: כו וְאֶשְׁקֹלָה עַל־יָדָם כֶּסֶף
כַּפָּרִים שְׁש־מֵאוֹת וְחֲמִשִּׁים וְכָל־כֶּסֶף מֵאָה
לְכַפָּרִים זָהָב מֵאָה כֶּכֶר: כז וְכַפָּרֵי זָהָב עֲשָׂרִים
לְאֲדָרְכָנִים אֶלֶף וְכָלִי נְחֹשֶׁת מִצֶּהָב 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'. In place of וְאֶשְׁקֹלָה, here following the Kethib, the Qere has וְאֶשְׁקֹלָה.

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: כֹּס שִׁקְדוֹ וְשִׁמְרוּ עַד־תִּשְׁקְלוּ לִפְנֵי שְׂרֵי
הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְשְׂרֵי־הָאֲבוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בִּירוּשָׁלַם
הַלְשָׁכוֹת בֵּית יְהוָה: לִי וְקִבְלוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם
מִשְׁקַל הַכֶּסֶף וְהַזָּהָב וְהַכֵּלִים לְהָבִיא לִירוּשָׁלַם
לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ: {פ}

לֹא וְנִסְעָה מִנְּהַר אַחָוָא בְּשָׁנִים עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ
הָרִאשׁוֹן לָלֶכֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם וַיִּדְּאֱלֹהֵינוּ הָיְתָה עָלֵינוּ
וַיִּצְלִלְנוּ מִכָּף אוֹיֵב וְאוֹרֵב עַל־הַדֶּרֶךְ: לֵב וְנִבְּוָא
יְרוּשָׁלַם וְנִשְׁבַּשׁ שָׁם יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה: לֵג וּבִיּוֹם הָרִבְעִי
נִשְׁקַל הַכֶּסֶף וְהַזָּהָב וְהַכֵּלִים בְּבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל־יַד־
מֶרְמוֹת בֶּן־אוּרִיָּה הַכֹּהֵן וְעִמּוֹ אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־פִּינְחָס
וְעִמָּהֶם יוֹזָבָד בֶּן־יִשׁוּעַ וְנוֹעַדִּיָּה בֶן־בְּנוּי הַלְוִיִּם:
לֵד בְּמִסְפָּר בְּמִשְׁקַל לְכָל וּיִכְתָּב כָּל־הַמִּשְׁקָל בְּעַת
הַהִיא: {פ}

לֵה הַבָּאִים מֵהַשְׁבִּי בְּנֵי־הַגּוֹלָה הַקְּרִיבוּ עֹלוֹת |

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

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' (מֶרְמוֹת), 'Jozabad' (יֹזָבָד), 'Noadiah' (נוֹעַדִּיָּה) & 'Binnui' (בְּנוּי), the LXX reads *Merimoth, Iwzabad, Nwadia & Bavaiia*, 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.

לֵאלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרִים שְׁנַיִם-עָשָׂר עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֵילִים | תְּשַׁעִים וְשֵׁשָׁה כִּבְשִׁים שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה
צִפְרֵי חֲטָאת שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר הַכֹּל עֹלָה לַיהוָה: {פ}
לִי וְיִתְּנוּ | אֶת־דִּתֵּי הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאַחֲשֹׁדְרֶפֶּלִי הַמֶּלֶךְ
וּפְחֹזֹת עֶבֶר הַנָּהָר וְנִשְׂאוּ אֶת־הָעַם וְאֶת־בֵּית
הָאֱלֹהִים: {ס}

offerings to the God of Israel – twelve bulls on behalf of all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and as a sin offering twelve he-goats: the whole of this as a burnt offering to Yahweh.

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'.

EZRA 9

רות פרק ט

^א וּכְבָּלוֹת אֱלֹהִים נִגְשׁוּ אֵלַי הַשָּׂרִים לֵאמֹר לֹא-
נִבְדְּלוּ הָעָם יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם מֵעַמֵּי
הָאֲרָצוֹת כְּתַעֲבַתִּיהֶם לִפְנֵעֵנִי הַחֲתִי הַפְּרִזִּי
הַיְבוּסִי הָעַמְּנִי הַמֹּאבִּי הַמִּצְרִי וְהָאֲמֹרִי: ^ב כִּי-
נָשְׂאוּ מִבְּנֹתֵיהֶם לָהֶם וּלְבָנֵיהֶם וְהִתְעַרְבוּ זָרַע
הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת וַיֵּד הַשָּׂרִים וְהַסֹּגְנִים הִיתָה
בַּמַּעַל הַזֶּה רָאשׁוֹנָה: {ס}

^ג וּכְשָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת-הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה קָרַעְתִּי אֶת-בִּגְדִי
וּמַעִילִי וְאֶמְרָטָה מִשְׁעַר רֹאשִׁי וּזְקָנִי וְאֶשְׁבָּה
מִשׁוּמָם: ^ד וְאֵלַי יֹאסְפוּ כָל חָרָד בְּדַבְּרֵי אֱלֹהֵי-
יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל מַעַל הַגּוֹלָה וְאֲנִי יֹשֵׁב מִשׁוּמָם עַד
לְמִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב: ^ה וּבְמִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב קָמַתִּי מִתַּעֲנִיטִי
וּבְקִרְעֵי בִגְדִי וּמַעִילִי וְאֶכְרַעַל עַל-בְּרַכִּי וְאֶפְרָשָׁה
כַּפִּי אֶל-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי: ^ו וְאֶמְרָה אֱלֹהֵי בִשְׁתִּי
וְנִכְלַמְתִּי לְהָרִים אֱלֹהֵי פָנַי אֵלַיךְ כִּי עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ רַבּוּ
לְמַעַלְהָ רֹאשׁ וְאֶשְׁמַתְנוּ גְּדֻלָּה 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 OT; it refers to the self-abasement that accompanies religious sorrow and fasting.

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

ז' מִיָּמֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּאִשְׁמָה גְּדוֹלָה עַד הַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה וּבַעֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ נִתְּנוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מַלְכֵינוּ כְּהִנֵּנוּ בְּיַד |
מַלְכֵי הָאָרְצוֹת בַּחֲרֹב בְּשָׁבִי וּבַבִּזָּה וּבַבִּשְׁת פָּנִים
כְּהִיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ח' וְעַתָּה כַּמַּעֲט־רֹגֶעַ הִיְתָה תַּחְנָה
מֵאֵת | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְהַשְׁאִיר לָנוּ פְּלִיטָה וְלַתֵּת-
לָנוּ יֵתֵד בְּמָקוֹם קֹדֶשׁוֹ לְהַאִיר עֵינֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וּלְתַתֵּנוּ מַחִיָּה מְעַט בַּעֲבַדְתָּנוּ: ט' כִּי-עֲבָדִים אֲנַחְנוּ
וּבַעֲבַדְתָּנוּ לֹא עֲזַבְנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַיִּטַּעֲלֵנוּ חֶסֶד לִפְנֵי
מַלְכֵי פָּרַס לְתֵת-לָנוּ מַחִיָּה לְרוֹמָם אֶת-בֵּית
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וּלְהַעֲמִיד אֶת-חֲרֻבָּתוֹ וּלְתֵת-לָנוּ גֹדֶר
בִּיהוּדָה וּבִירוּשָׁלַם: {ס}

י' וְעַתָּה מֵה־נֹּאמַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַחֲר־יְזֹאת כִּי עֲזַבְנוּ
מִצְוֹתֶיךָ: י"א אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָ בְּיַד עֲבָדֶיךָ הַנְּבִיאִים לֵאמֹר
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם בָּאִים לְרִשְׁתָּהּ אָרֶץ נֹדָה הִיא
בְּנִדַת עַמֵּי הָאָרְצוֹת בְּתוֹעֲבֹתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר מְלֹאוֹהָ
מִפֶּה אֶל-פֶּה בְּטִמְאַתֶּם: י"ב וְעַתָּה בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם אֶל-
תִּתְּנוּ לְבָנֵיהֶם וּבְנֹתֵיהֶם אֶל-תִּשְׁאוּ לְבָנֵיכֶם וְלֹא-
תִדְרְשׁוּ 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’, for 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’.

וְאָכַלְתֶּם אֶת־טוֹב הָאָרֶץ וְהוֹרַשְׁתֶּם לְבָנֵיכֶם עַד־
 עוֹלָם: ^י וְאַחֲרֵי כָל־הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂינוּ הָרָעִים
 וּבְאַשְׁמֹתֵנוּ הַגְּדֹלָה כִּי | אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חֲשַׁכְתָּ
 לְמַטָּה מֵעֹנֻנּוֹ וְנִתְּתָה לָנוּ פְּלִיטָה כְּזֹאת: ^{יד} הַנְּשׁוּב
 לְהַפְּרַ מִצֻּוֹתֶיךָ וּלְהִתְחַתֵּן בְּעַמֵּי הַתַּעֲבוֹת הָאֵלֶּה
 הֲלוֹא תִאֲנָף־בָּנוּ עַד־כִּלְיָה לְאִין שְׂאֲרִית
 וּפְלִיטָה: {פ}

^{טו} יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל צַדִּיק אַתָּה כִּי־נִשְׁאַרְנוּ
 פְּלִיטָה כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הִנֵּנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּאַשְׁמֹתֵינוּ כִּי אֵין
 לַעֲמֹד 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 וְכַהֲתַפֵּל עֶזְרָא וְכַהֲתוֹדוֹתוֹ בְּכָה וּמִתְנַפֵּל לִפְנֵי
בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים נִקְבְּצוּ אֵלָיו מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל קָהָל רַב־מְאֹד
אֲנָשִׁים וְנָשִׁים וְיֻלְדִּים כִּי־בָכוּ הָעָם הָרַבָּה־
בְּכָה: {ס}

ב וַיַּעַן שְׁכַנְיָה בֶן־יְחִיָּאל מִבְּנֵי עוֹלָם וַיֹּאמֶר
לְעֶזְרָא אֲנַחְנוּ מַעֲלֵנוּ בָאֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשָׁב נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת
מֵעַמִּי הָאָרֶץ וְעַתָּה יִשְׁמְקוּהָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־זֹאת:
ג וְעַתָּה נִכְרַת־בְּרִית לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ לְהוֹצִיא כָל־נָשִׁים
וְהַנּוֹלָד מֵהֶם בַּעֲצַת אֲדָנִי וְהַחֲרָדִים בְּמִצְוֹת
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְכַתּוּרָה יַעֲשֶׂה: ד קוֹם כִּי־עַלֶיךָ הַדָּבָר
וְאֲנַחְנוּ עִמָּךְ חֲזָק וַעֲשֵׂה: {פ}

ה וַיָּקָם עֶזְרָא וַיִּשְׁבַּע אֶת־שָׂרֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם וְכָל־
יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּדָבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּשְׁבָּעוּ: וַיָּקָם עֶזְרָא
מִלִּפְנֵי בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־לִשְׁכַּת יְהוֹחָנָן בֶּן־

¹ When Ezra, weeping and prostrating himself in front of the Temple of God, was praying and making confession, a very large crowd of men, women and children of Israel gathered round him; the people 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, in spite of this, there is still 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

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 עוֹלָם ('eternity'), here following the Kethib, the Qere has עֵילָם ('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.

אֶלְיָשִׁיב וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁם לֶחֶם לֹא־אָכַל וּמִים לֹא־שָׁתָה
כִּי מֵתָאֵבֵל עַל־מַעַל הַגּוֹלָה: {ס}

וַיַּעֲבִירוּ קוֹל בְּיהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם לְכָל בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה
לְהִקָּבֵץ יְרוּשָׁלַם: ^ח וְכָל־אִשָּׁר לֹא־יָבֹא לְשִׁלֻּשֶׁת
הַיָּמִים כַּעֲצַת הַשָּׂרִים וְהַזְקֵנִים יִחְרַם כָּל־רְכוּשׁוֹ
וְהוּא יִבְדֵּל מִקֵּהַל הַגּוֹלָה: {ס}

^ט וַיִּקָּבְצוּ כָּל־אֲנָשֵׁי־יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵימָן | יְרוּשָׁלַם
לְשִׁלֻּשֶׁת הַיָּמִים הוּא חֹדֶשׁ הַתְּשִׁיעִי בְּעֶשְׂרִים
בַּחֹדֶשׁ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ כָּל־הָעָם בְּרָחוּב בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים
מִרְעִידִים עַל־הַדָּבָר וּמִהַגְשָׁמִים: {פ}

^י וַיִּקָּם עֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אַתֶּם מַעֲלֹתֶם
וַתִּשְׁיבוּ נָשִׁים נָכְרִיּוֹת לְהוֹסִיף עַל־אֲשַׁמַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל:
^{יא} וְעַתָּה תִּנְּנוּ תוֹדָה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־אֲבֹתֵיכֶם וַעֲשׂוּ
רְצוֹנִי וְהַבְדֵּלוּ מֵעַמִּי הָאָרֶץ וּמִן־הַנָּשִׁים הַנָּכְרִיּוֹת:
^{יב} וַיַּעֲנוּ כָּל־הַקֵּהָל וַיֹּאמְרוּ קוֹל גָּדוֹל בֵּן כְּדִבְרִיד
כְּדִבְרֹךְ עָלֵינוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת: ^{יג} אָבָל הָעָם רַב וְהָעֵת
גְּשָׁמִים וְאֵין כָּח לַעֲמֹד בַּחוּץ וְהַמְּלָאכָה לֹא־לִיּוֹם

son of Eliashib, where he went without eating food or drinking water, because he was still in mourning over the exiles' infidelity.

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

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 In place of 'כְּדִבְרִיד', here following the *Kethib*, the *Qere* has כְּדִבְרֹךְ.

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

אֶחָד וְלֹא לְשָׁנִים כִּי־הִרְבִּינוּ לַפֶּשַׁע בַּדֶּבֶר הַזֶּה:
 יִעֲמְדוּ־נָא שְׂרִינֹו לְכָל־הַקֹּהֶל וְכָל | אֲשֶׁר בָּעֲרִינוּ
 הַהֹשִׁיב נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת יָבֹא לְעֵתִים מְזֻמָּנִים וְעִמָּהֶם
 זִקְנֵי־עִיר וְעִיר וּשְׁפָטִיָּה עַד לְהֹשִׁיב חֲרוֹן אָף־
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד לַדֶּבֶר הַזֶּה: {פ}

טו אֶךְ יוֹנָתָן בֶּן־עֲשָׂהאֵל וִיחִזְיָה בֶן־תְּקוּהָ עֲמְדוּ
 עַל־זֹאת וּמִשְׁלֵם וְשַׁבְּתִי הַלֵּוִי עֲזָרָם: טז וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־כֵן
 בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה וַיִּבְדְּלוּ עֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן אַנְשִׁים רָאשֵׁי
 הָאֲבוֹת לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם וְכָל־שְׁמוֹת וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בְיוֹם
 אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הָעֲשִׂירִי לְדִרְיוֹשׁ הַדֶּבֶר: יז וַיִּכְלוּ בָכָל
 אַנְשֵׁים הַהֹשִׁיבוּ נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת עַד יוֹם אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ
 הָרִאשׁוֹן: {פ}

יח וַיִּמָּצְא מִבְּנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁיבוּ נָשִׁים נְכָרִיּוֹת
 מִבְּנֵי יִשׁוּעַ בֶּן־יֹצָדָק וְאֶחָיו מַעֲשִׂיָּה וְאַלְיָעָזָר וִירִיב
 וְגִדְלִיָּה: יט וַיִּתְּנוּ יָדָם לְהוֹצִיא נְשֵׁיהֶם וְאֲשָׁמָם
 אֵיל־צֹאן עַל־אֲשָׁמָתָם: {ס}

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 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.

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

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

¹⁶ 'Selected' follows 1Es 9:16; the Hebrew text 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 (9:1-10:17) concluded with vv. 19 and 44b. The Chronicler has inserted a list of the culprits (vv. 18, 20-44a), which he may have taken from the Temple archives but which he certainly 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'.

כ ומבני אמר חנני וזבדיה: {ס}	20 Of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.
כא ומבני חרם מעשיה ואליה ושמעיה ויחיאל ועזיה:	21 Of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel and Uziah.
כב ומבני פשחור אליועיני מעשיה ישמעאל נתנאל יוזבד ואלעשה: {ס}	22 Of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.
כג ומנהלויים יוזבד ושמעיה וקליה הוא קליטא פתחיה יהודה ואליעזר: {ס}	23 Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah – that is, Kelita – Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.
כד ומנהמשוררים אלישיב ומנהשערים שלם וטלם ואורי: {ס}	24 Of the singers: Eliashib and Zaccur. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.
כה ומישראל מבני פרעש רמיה ויזיה ומלכיה ומימן ואלעזר ומלכיה ובניה: {ס}	25 Of the Israelites: of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah, and Benaiah.
כו ומבני עילם מתניה זכריה ויחיאל ועבדי וירמות ואליה: {ס}	26 Of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.
כז ומבני זתוא אליועיני אלישיב מתניה וירמות וזבד ועזיזא: {ס}	27 Of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.

20 For 'Immer' (אמר), 'Hanani' (חנני) & 'Zebadiah' (זבדיה), the LXX reads *Εμμηρ, Ανανι & Ζαβδια*, respectively.

21 For 'Harim' (חרם), 'Maaseiah' (מעשיה), 'Elijah' (אליה), 'Shemaiah' (שמעיה), 'Jehiel' (יחיאל) & 'Uzziah' (עזיה), the LXX reads *Ηραμ, Μασαια, Ελια, Σαμαια, Ιηλ & Οζια*, respectively.

22 For 'Pashhur' (פשחור), 'Elioenai' (אליועיני), 'Maaseiah' (מעשיה), 'Ishmael' (ישמעאל), 'Nethanel' (נתנאל), 'Jozabad' (יוזבד) & 'Elasah' (אלעשה), the LXX reads *Φασουρ, Ελιωηναι, Μασαια, Ισμαηλ, Ναθαναηλ, Ιωζαβαδ & Ηλασα*, respectively.

23 For 'Shimei' (שמעי), 'Kelaiah' (קליה), 'Kelita' (קליטא) & 'Pethahiah' (פתחיה), 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' (מלכיה) in place of 'Hashabiah', here following the LXX (*Ασαβια*) and 1Es 9:26.

26 For 'Elam' (עילם), 'Mattaniah' (מתניה), 'Abdi' (עבדי) & 'Jeremoth' (ירמות), the LXX reads *Ηλαμ, Μαθανια, Αβδια & Ιαριμωθ*, respectively.

27 For 'Zattu' (זתוא), 'Zabad' (זבד) & 'Aziza' (עזיזא), the LXX has *Ζαθουα, Ζαβαδ & Οζιζα*, respectively.

- כח ומבני בבִּי יהוֹחָנָן חֲנַנְיָה זְבִי עֲתָלַי: {ס} 28 Of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.
- כט ומבני בני מִשְׁלָם מְלוּךְ וְעֵדִיָּה יֶשׁוּב וְשֵׁאֵל יִרְמוֹת וְרִמּוֹת: {ס} 29 Of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Jedaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.
- ל ומבני פַּחַת מוֹאֵב עֲדְנָא וְכַלָּל בְּנֵיה מַעֲשִׂיָּה מַתַּנְיָה בְּצַלְאֵל וּבְנֵי וּמְנַשֶּׁה: {ס} 30 Of the sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.
- לא ובני חֶרֶם אֱלִיעֶזֶר יִשִּׁיָּה מַלְכִּיָּה שְׁמַעִיָּה שְׁמַעוֹן: לב בְּנִימִן מְלוּךְ שְׁמַרְיָה: {ס} 31 Of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.
- לג מבני חֶשֶׁם מַתַּנִּי מַתַּתָּה זָבָד אֱלִיפְלֵט יִרְמִי מְנַשֶּׁה שְׁמַעִי: {ס} 33 Of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.
- לד מבני בְּנֵי מַעְדֵי עֲמֶרֶם וְאוּאֵל: {ס} 34 Of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel.
- לה בְּנֵיה בְּדִיָּה כְלוּהִי כְלוּהִי: לו וְנִיָּה מְרִמּוֹת אֱלִישִׁיב: לז מַתַּנְיָה מַתַּנִּי וִיעֶשׂו וִיעֶשִׂי: 35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi, 36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jassu.

28 For 'Bebai' (בְּבִי), 'Zabbai' (זְבִי) & 'Athlai' (עֲתָלַי), the LXX reads *Bαβι, Ζαβου & Οθαλι*, respectively.

29 For 'Bani' (בְּנִי), 'Meshullam' (מְשֻׁלָּם), 'Malluch' (מְלוּךְ), 'Jedaiah' (עֵדִיָּה), 'Jashub' (יֶשׁוּב) & 'Sheal' (שֵׁאֵל), the LXX reads *Βανουι, Μεσουλαμ, Μαλουχ, Αδαϊας, Ιασουβ & Σαλουια*, respectively. In place of יִרְמוֹת, here following the Kethib and LXX (פְּרִמּוֹת), the Qere has יִרְמוֹת ('Jeremoth').

30 For 'Adna' (עֲדְנָא), 'Chelal' (כַּלָּל), 'Benaiah' (בְּנֵיָה), 'Maaseiah' (מַעֲשִׂיָּה), 'Mattaniah' (מַתַּנְיָה), 'Bezalel' (בְּצַלְאֵל), 'Binnui' (בְּנִי) & 'Manasseh' (מְנַשֶּׁה), the LXX reads *Εδνε, Χαληλ, Βαναϊα, Μασση, Μαθανια, Βεσεληλ, Βανουι & Μανασση*, respectively.

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

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

33 For 'Hashum' (חֶשֶׁם), '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' (עֲמֶרֶם) & 'Uel' (אוּאֵל), the LXX reads *Μοοδι, Αμραμ & Ουηλ*, respectively.

35 For 'Benaiah' (בְּנֵיָה), 'Bedeiah' (בְּדִיָּה) & 'Cheluhi' (כְלוּהִי), following the Kethib, the LXX reads *Βαναϊα, Βαδαϊα & 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' (מְרִמּוֹת) & 'Eliashib' (אֱלִישִׁיב), the LXX reads *Ουιεχωα, Ιεραμωθ & Ελιασιβ*, respectively.

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

לח ובני ובנוי שמעי: לט ושלמיה ונתן ועדיה: ³⁸ And Bani and Binnui: Shimei, ³⁹ Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,
 מ מכנדבי ששי שרי: מא עזראל ושלמיהו ⁴⁰ Machnadebai: Shashai, Sharai, ⁴¹ Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,
 שמריה: מב שלום אמריה יוסף: {ס} ⁴² Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.
 מג מבני נבו יעאל מתתיה זבד זבינא ידו ידי ⁴³ Of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel,
 ויזאל בניה: and Benaiah.
 מד כל-אלה נשאי נשאו נשים נכריות ויש מהם ⁴⁴ All these had married foreign wives but sent them away with their
 נשים וישימו בנים: {פ} children.

³⁸ In place of ‘And Bani and Binnui’, here following the MT (ובני ובנוי), the NJB, NRSV & NETB, following the LXX (ἐποίησαν οἱ υἱοὶ Βανουι), have ‘from the sons of Binnui’.

³⁹ For ‘Shelemiah’ (שלמיה), ‘Nathan’ (נתן) & ‘Adaiah’ (עדיה), the LXX reads Σελεμια, Ναθαν & Αδαια, respectively.

⁴⁰ For ‘Machnadebai’ (מכנדבי), ‘Shashai’ (ששי) & ‘Sharai’ (שרי), the LXX reads Μαχναδαβου, Σεσι & Σαρου, respectively.

⁴¹ For ‘Azarel’ (עזראל), ‘Shelemiah’ (שלמיהו) & ‘Shemariah’ (שמריה), the LXX reads Εζερχηλ, Σελεμια & Σαμαρια, respectively.

⁴² For ‘Shallum’ (שלום), ‘Amariah’ (אמריה) & ‘Joseph’ (יוסף), the LXX reads Σαλουμ, Αμαρια & Ιωσηφ, respectively.

⁴³ For ‘Jeiel’ (יעאל), ‘Mattithiah’ (מתתיה), ‘Zabad’ (זבד), ‘Zebina’ (זבינא), ‘Jaddai’ (יד) – here following the Qere, where the Kethib has ידו, ‘Joel’ (יזאל) & ‘Benaiah’ (בניה), the LXX reads, respectively, Ιρηλ, Μαθασια, 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*.