

THE FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS

INTRODUCTION

This book reproduces the substance of the end of II Chronicles, the whole of Ezra and a part of Nehemiah. In the Septuagint, where Ezra and Nehemiah are called I and II Esdras, this book is called III Esdras (or, by modern scholars, The Greek Ezra), but it is placed before the other two, and Josephus' account of the period (Antiquities 11.1-5) uses it and ignores the others. What the precise literary relationship between the parallel accounts may be, whether one is a revision of the other or both derive independently from a common source, is a much debated question; both versions are more concerned with inculcating special views regarding the Temple and the observance of the Law than with the historical course of events.

What is new in I Esdras and most attractive is the story of the three guardsmen (3.1-5.6). The story probably originated in Persia, was translated into Aramaic, and then adapted to the purposes of this book. Our author has named the victorious guardsman Zerubabel to cement the connection with his history and to magnify his favorite personage; for his prize Zerubabel craves and obtains the privilege of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and the Temple. Zerubabl's eloquent defense of his thesis that truth is strongest (familiar in world literature as magna est veritas et praevalabit) has been acclaimed a precious bit of Achaemenid literature, perhaps of importance for the development of the doctrine of the logos. The vicissitudes of the story offer an instructive example of the Hellenistic melting pot at work. The date of I Esdras is somewhere near the beginning of the common era.

1 When Josiah celebrated the Passover festival in Jerusalem to his Lord, he sacrificed the Passover on the fourteenth day of the
2) first month, placing the priests in their divisions, clad in
3) their vestments, in the temple of the Lord. And he ordered the Levites, the temple slaves of Israel, to consecrate themselves to the Lord, when they put the holy chest of the Lord in the house of the Lord, which Solomon the king, the
4) son of David, had built; and he said,

“You will not have to carry it on your shoulders any more; so now worship the Lord your God, and serve His people, Israel, and prepare yourselves by your families and
5) kindreds, as David, king of Israel, wrote, and with all the magnificence of Solomon his son; and take your places in the temple, according to your ancestral groups as Levites
6) before your brothers, the Israelites, in proper order, and sacrifice the Passover, and get the sacrifices ready for your brothers, and observe the Passover, in accordance with the
7) Lord’s command which was given to Moses.”

And Josiah gave the people that were present thirty thousand lambs and kids, and three thousand calves; these were given out of the king’s revenues, as he promised, to the
8) people and the priests and Levites. And Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, the rulers of the temple, gave the priests for the Passover two thousand, six hundred sheep
9) and three hundred calves. And Jeconiah and Shemaiah and Nathanael, his brother, and Asabiah and Ochiel and Joram, colonels of regiments, gave the Levites for the
10) Passover five thousand sheep and seven hundred calves. And it was done; the priests and Levites, with the unleavened bread, stood in proper order, according to their kindreds

11) and their family divisions, before the people, to make the offering to the Lord, as it is prescribed in the book of Moses;

12) this they did in the morning. They roasted the Passover with fire in the proper way, and boiled the sacrifices in

13) caldrons and basins, with savory odors, and set them before all the people.

Afterward they prepared some for themselves

14) and their brothers the priests, the sons of Aaron; for the priests were offering the fat until late, so the Levites prepared meat for themselves and for their brothers the priests, the sons of Aaron.

15) The sacred musicians, too, the sons of Asaph, were in their places, according to the regulations of David, with Asaph and Zechariah and Eddinus, who were

16) of the king's circle, and the doorkeepers stood at each door. No one needed to interrupt his duties for the day, for their brothers, the Levites, prepared meat for them.

17) So the things that had to do with the Lord's sacrifices were carried out

18) that day, in celebrating the Passover and offering the sacrifices on the altar of the Lord, as King Josiah commanded.

19) So the Israelites who were present at that time observed the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days.

20) No such Passover had been celebrated in Israel since the times of the prophet Samuel,

21) and none of the kings of Israel had celebrated such a Passover as Josiah and the priests and the Levites and the Jews celebrated with all the Israelites that were present in their dwellings in Jerusalem.

22) It was in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah that this

23) Passover was observed. And the doings of Josiah were

24) upright in the Lord's sight, for his heart was full of piety. And the events of his times have been recorded in the past about those who sinned and acted wickedly toward the Lord, beyond any other nation or kingdom, and how they grieved him keenly, so that the words of the Lord rose up to condemn Israel.

25) After all these doings of Josiah, it happened that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, came to make war at Carchemish on the

26) Euphrates, and Josiah went out to encounter him. And the king of Egypt sent word to him, saying,

27) “What do you want of me, King of Judah? I was not sent against you by the Lord God, for my war is on the Euphrates. And now the Lord is with me! The Lord is with

28) me, urging me on; depart and do not oppose the Lord.”

But Josiah would not turn back to his chariot, but tried to fight with him, disregarding the words of Jeremiah the

29) prophet, spoken by the mouth of the Lord, and joined battle with him in the plain of Megiddo, and the leaders fought

30) against King Josiah. And the king said to his servants,

“Take me away from the battle, for I am very sick.”

And his servants immediately took him out of the fray.

31) And he got into his second chariot, and was taken back to Jerusalem, and departed this life, and was buried in the

32) tomb of his forefathers. And they grieved for Josiah all over Judah, and Jeremiah the prophet lamented for Josiah, and the principal men, with the women, have mourned him to this day; and it was ordained that this should always be

33) done, throughout all the nation of Israel. This is recorded in the scroll of the histories of the kings of Judah; and every one of the deeds of Josiah, and his splendor, and his understanding of the Law of the Lord, and what he had done before, and these present deeds, are told in the scroll of the kings of Israel and Judah.

34) And the men of the nation took Jeconiah, the son of Josiah, and made him king, to succeed Josiah his father,

35) when he was twenty-three years old. And he reigned three months in Judah and Jerusalem. Then the king of Egypt

36) deposed him from reigning in Jerusalem, and he assessed the nation a hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold.

37) And the king of Egypt appointed Jehoiakim, his brother, king of Judah and Jerusalem.

38) And Jehoiakim put the nobles in prison and seized his brother Zarius and brought him back from Egypt.

39) Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king of Judah and Jerusalem, and he did what was wrong in the

40) sight of the Lord. And Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came against him, and put him in chains of brass and

41) took him to Babylon. And Nebuchadnezzar took some of the sacred dishes of the Lord and carried them off and set them up in his temple in Babylon.

42) But the stories about him and his uncleanness and his impious behavior are written in the chronicles of the kings.

43) And Jehoachin, his son, became king in his stead; for when he was made king, he was eighteen years old,

44) and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem, and did what was wrong in the sight of the Lord.

45) And a year later, Nebuchadnezzar sent and removed him to Babylon, with the sacred dishes of the Lord,

46) and appointed Zedekiah king of Judah and Jerusalem, when Zedekiah was twenty-one years old.

47) And he reigned eleven years. And he did what was wrong in the sight of the Lord, and disregarded the words that were spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, from the mouth of the Lord.

48) And although King Nebuchadnezzar had made him swear by the name of the Lord, he broke his oath and rebelled, and he hardened his neck and his heart and transgressed the laws of the Lord, the God of Israel.

49) And the leaders of the people and of the priests did many impious acts and surpassed in lawlessness all the unclean acts of all the heathen, and polluted the temple of the Lord that had been consecrated in Jerusalem.

50) And the God of their forefathers sent by his messenger to call them back, for he would have spared them and his dwelling;

51) but they mocked his messengers, and whenever the Lord spoke to
52) them, they made sport of his prophets, until he grew angry with his people
because of their ungodliness and ordered the
53) kings of the Chaldeans to be brought against them. These killed their young men
with the sword around their holy temple, and did not spare youth or maiden, old
man or
54) child, for he delivered them all into their hands. And all the sacred dishes of the
Lord, great and small, and the chests of the Lord, and the royal treasures they took,
and
55) carried them off to Babylon. And they burned the house of the Lord, and tore
down the walls of Jerusalem, and
56) burned down their towers, and completely ruined all her glories. And those who
survived the sword he removed to
57) Babylon. And they were his servants and those of his children, until the Persians
began to reign; to fulfill what the Lord said by the mouth of Jeremiah,
58) “Until the land enjoys its Sabbaths, all the time of her desolation she shall
keep the Sabbath, until the lapse of seventy years.”

2 In the first year that Cyrus reigned over Persia, to fulfill
2) what the Lord said by the mouth of Jeremiah, the Lord stirred the heart of Cyrus,
king of Persia, and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it in
3) writing, saying,
“Thus speaks Cyrus, king of Persia: The Lord of Israel,
4) the Lord Most High, has made me king of the world, and directed me to build him
a house in Jerusalem, in Judah.
5) So if anyone of you is of his people, his Lord be with him, and let him go up to
Jerusalem, in Judah, and build the house of the Lord of Israel; he is the Lord who
lives in Jerusalem.
6) So let a man’s neighbors, who live in each

7) place, help him with gold and silver, with presents, with horses and cattle, beside the other things added as vows for the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.”

8) Then the heads of families of the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin arose, and the priests and the Levites, and all whose hearts the Lord had stirred to go up to build the

9) house in Jerusalem for the Lord. And their neighbors helped them with everything, with silver and gold, with horses and cattle, and a great many vows from many whose hearts were stirred.

10) And King Cyrus brought out the sacred dishes of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried off from Jerusalem,

11) and deposited in the temple of his idols; but Cyrus, king of Persia, brought them out, and delivered them to his

12) treasurer Mithridates, and they were turned over by him to Sheshbazzar, the governor of Judah.

13) And this was the number of them: a thousand gold cups, a thousand silver cups, twenty-nine silver censers, thirty gold bowls, two thousand, four hundred and ten silver bowls, and a thousand other dishes.

14) So all the dishes, gold and silver, five thousand, four hundred and sixty-nine,

15) were taken and carried back by Sheshbazzar, along with those who had been in captivity, from Babylon to Jerusalem.

16) But in the times of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, Bishlam, Mithridates, Tabeel, Rehum, the recorder, and Shimshai, the scribe, and the others associated with them, living in Samaria and other places, wrote him the following letter, against those who lived in Judah and Jerusalem:

17) “To King Artaxerxes our Lord, your servants Rehum, the recorder, and Shimshai, the scribe, and the other judges of

18) their court in Coelesyria and Phoenicia; now be it known to our lord the king, that the Jews who have come up to us from you have reached Jerusalem and are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city and repairing its bazaars and

19) walls and laying the foundations of a temple. Now if this city is rebuilt and its walls completed, they will not submit

20) to paying tribute, but will even resist the kings. And since the matter of the temple is now under way, we think it

21) right not to neglect such a matter, but to address our lord the king, so that, if you approve, a search may be made in

22) the records of your forefathers; for you will find in their chronicles what is written about them, and you will learn that this city was rebellious, troublesome to kings and

23) towns, and that the Jews were rebels and organizers of warfare in it from ancient times; that was why the city was laid waste.

24) We now therefore inform you, lord king, that if this city is rebuilt, and its walls restored, you will no longer have a way of access to Coelesyria and Phoenicia.”

25) Then the king wrote in reply to Rehum, the recorder, and Shimshai, the scribe, and their associates, who lived in Samaria, Syria, and Phoenicia, as follows:

26) “I have read the letter which you sent me. I accordingly ordered search to be made, and it was found that this city

27) from ancient times used to rebel against the kings, and the people created revolts and war in it, and that stern and powerful kings ruled in Jerusalem, and took tribute from

28) Coelesyria and Phoenicia. Therefore I have now given orders to prevent these men from rebuilding the city, and

29) to take measures that nothing further be done and that these wicked undertakings go no farther, to the annoyance of the kings.”

30) When the message of King Artaxerxes was read, Rehum and Shimshai, the scribe, and their associates proceeded in haste to Jerusalem, with horsemen and a crowd of troops and began to hinder the builders. So the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem was suspended until the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia.

3 Now King Darius made a great banquet for all his subjects, and all his domestics, and all the nobles of Media and

2) Persia, and all the viceroys and provincial and district governors under his sway, in the hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia.

3) And they ate and drank, and when they were satisfied, they went home, but Darius the king went to his bedroom, and fell asleep, and then awoke.

4) Then the three young men of his bodyguard, who kept guard over the person of the king, said to one another,

5) "Let us each say what one thing is strongest, and Darius the king will give rich presents and great honors to the one whose words seem the wisest,

6) and have him dressed in purple, and drink from gold plate, and sleep on a gold bed, and give him a chariot with gold bridles, and a linen headdress,

7) and a necklace around his neck, and because of his wisdom he shall sit next to Darius, and be called Darius' kinsman."

8) Then they each wrote his own answer and put his seal on it,

9) and put them under the pillow of King Darius, and said,

"When the king wakes up, they will give him the writing, and the one whose choice the king and the three princes of Persia judge the wisest, shall be considered the victor in what he has written."

10) The first wrote,

"Wine is strongest."

11) The second wrote,

"The king is strongest."

12) The third wrote,

"Women are strongest, but truth prevails over everything."

13) So when the king awoke, they took the writing and gave it to him and he read it.

14) Then he sent and summoned all the nobles of Persia and Media, and the governors and officers

15) and magistrates and officials, and he took his seat in the council chamber, and what was written was read before them.

16) And he said,

"Summon the young men, and let them show their sons."

17) And they were summoned, and came in. And they said to them,
“Explain to us about what you have written.”

18) So the first one, who had told of the strength of wine, began and said,
“Gentlemen, how supremely strong wine is! It leads the

19) minds of all who drink it astray. It makes the mind of the king and the mind of
the fatherless child alike; the mind of

20) the menial and the freeman, of the poor and the rich. It turns every thought to
mirth and merrymaking, and forgets all grief and debt.

21) It makes all hearts rich, and forgets kings and governors, and makes everybody
talk in thousands.

22) And when they drink, they forget to be friendly to friends

23) and brothers, and very soon they draw their swords. And when they recover
from their wine, they cannot remember what they have done. Gentlemen, is not
wine supremely strong, since it forces them to act so?”

When he said this, he stopped.

4 Then the second, who had told of the king’s might, began to speak:

2 “Gentlemen, are not men strongest, because they control

3) land and sea, and all that is in them? But the king is supremely strong, and is lord
and master of them, and every

4) command he gives them they obey. If he orders them to make war one one
another, they do so; and if he sends them out against the enemy, they go, and
surmount mountains, walls and towers.

5) They kill and are killed, but they do not disobey the king’s command. And if they
are victorious, they bring everything to the king, the spoils they take and all the rest.

6) And those who do not go to war or fight, but till the soil, again, when they sow
and reap, bring it to the king,

7) and they compel one another to pay taxes to the king. He is only one man; but if
he orders them to kill, they kill; if he

8) orders them to release, they release; if he orders them to strike down, they strike; if he orders them to lay waste, they lay waste;

9) if he orders them to build, they build; if he orders them to cut down, they cut down; if he orders them to plant, they plant.

10) So all his people and his troops obey him.

11) Besides, he reclines at table, he eats and drinks and sleeps, and they keep watch about him, and they cannot any of them go away and look after his own affairs, or disobey him at all.

12) Gentlemen, how can the king not be strongest, when he is so obeyed?"

And he stopped.

13) Then the third, who had spoken of women and of truth—his name was Zerubbabel—began to speak:

14) "Gentlemen, is not the king great, and are not men many, and is not wine strong? Who is it then that rules over them and masters them?"

15) Is it not women? Women have borne the king and all the people, who are lords of sea and land;

16) from them they are sprung, and they brought them up, to

17) plant the vineyards, from which the wine comes. They make men's clothes, they make men's splendor, and men cannot exist without women.

18) Why, if men amass gold and silver, and everything of beauty, and then see one woman

19) remarkable for looks and beauty, they let all these things go, and gape at her, and stare at her with open mouths, and would all rather have her than gold or silver or anything of beauty.

20) A man will leave his own father, who brought him up, and his own country, and be united to his wife.

21) With his wife he ends his days, and remembers neither his

22) father nor his mother nor his country. Hence you must recognize that women rule over men. Do you not toil and

23) labor, and bring it all and give it to your wives? A man takes his sword and goes out on expeditions to rob and steal,

24) and to sail the sea and the rivers; he faces the lion and walks in the darkness,
and when he steals and robs and plunders, he

25) brings it back to the woman he loves. So a man loves his

26) wife better than his father or mother. Many have lost their heads completely for
the sake of women, and become slaves

27) for their sakes. Many have perished, or failed, or sinned for

28) the sake of women. Now do you not believe me? Is not the king great in his
power? Do not all lands fear even to

29) touch him? Yet I have seen him with Apame, the king's concubine, the daughter
of the noble Bartacus, sitting at the

30) king's right hand, and taking the crown from the king's head, and putting it on
her own, and she slapped the king

31) with her left hand. At this the king stared at her openmouthed. If she smiled at
him, he laughed; if she grew angry at him, he flattered her, so that she might be
reconciled to him again.

32) Gentlemen, how can women not be mighty, when they act like that?"

33) Then the king and the nobles looked at one another, and he began to speak
about truth:

34) "Gentlemen, are not women mighty? The earth is vast, and heaven is high,
and the sun is swift in his course, for he circles about the heavens and hastens back
to his own

35) starting-point in a single day. Is he not great who does these things? So truth is
great, and mightier than all other things.

36) The whole earth calls upon truth, and heaven blesses her; all his works quake
and tremble, there is no

37) wrongdoing with him. Wine is not upright, the king is not upright, women are
not upright, all the sons of men are not upright, and all their doings, all such things,
are not upright; there is no truth in them, and through their unrighteousness they
will perish.

38) But truth endures and is strong forever, and lives and reigns forever and ever.

39) There is no partiality or preference with her, but she does what is right, rather than all that is wrong and wicked.

40) All men approve her doings, and there is no injustice in her judgment. To her belongs power and the royal dignity and authority and majesty in all the ages; blessed be the God of truth!"

41) When he stopped speaking, all the people shouted and said,
"Truth is great and supremely strong."

42) Then the king said to him,
"Ask whatever you please, beyond what is written here, and we will give it to you, since you have been found the wisest. You shall sit next to me, and be called my kinsman,"

43) Then he said to the king,
"Remember the vow that you made, the day you succeeded to your throne,

44) to rebuild Jerusalem and send back all the dishes taken from Jerusalem, which Cyrus set aside, when he vowed to destroy Babylon, and to send them back there.

45) And you vowed to rebuild the house, which the Edomites burned, when Jerusalem had been laid waste by the Chaldeans.

46) So now, my lord the king, this is what I ask and request of you, and this is the princely liberality to come from you: I beg you to carry out the vow that you vowed with your own lips to the King of Heaven that you would carry out."

47) Then Darius, the king, got up and kissed him, and he wrote letters for him to all his managers and magistrates and officers and governors, to escort him in safety with all who were going up with him to rebuild Jerusalem.

48) And he wrote letters to all the magistrates in Coelesyria and Phoenicia and to those in the Lebanon, to bring cedar timbers from the Lebanon to Jerusalem and that they should help him to rebuild the city.

49) And he wrote in the interest of all the Jews who were going up from his kingdom to Judah, to secure their freedom, that no noble or governor or

50) magistrate or manager should forcibly enter their doors, and that all the country which they were to occupy they should possess free from tribute; and that the Edomites should give

51) up the Jewish villages which they controlled, and that twenty talents a year should be given for the rebuilding of
52) the temple, until it was completed, and ten talents a year besides, to provide burnt offerings to be offered daily upon the altar, in accordance with the command they had to offer
53) seventeen, and that all who came up from Babylonia to rebuild the city should have their freedom, they and their
54) children and all the priests who came up. He wrote providing their expenses also, and the priestly vestments in which
55) they officiate. And he wrote that the Levites' expenses should be provided until the day when the house should be
56) finished and Jerusalem rebuilt. And he wrote that lots of land and wages should be given to all who guarded the city.
57) And he sent back all the dishes from Babylon, which Cyrus had set aside; and all that Cyrus had ordered done he commanded them to do and to send back to Jerusalem.

58) When the young man went out, he lifted his face to heaven toward Jerusalem, and praised the King of Heaven,

59) saying,

“From you comes victory, from you comes wisdom; to
60) you belongs glory, and I am your servant. Blessed are you, who have given me wisdom; I praise you, Lord of my forefathers.”

61) And he took the letters and went to Babylon,
62) and reported it to all his brothers. And they blessed the God of their forefathers, because he had given them relief and
63) liberty to go up and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple which was called by his name; and they banqueted with music and gladness for seven days.

5 After this the heads of families were chosen to go up, according to their clans, with their wives and sons and daughters, and their male and female slaves, and their cattle.

2) And Darius sent with them a thousand horsemen, to escort them back to Jerusalem in peace, with music of

3) drums and flutes (for all their brothers made merry); he made them go up with them.

4) These are the names of the men who went up, by their

5) families within their tribes, for their priestly office: of the priests, the sons of Phineas, the son of Aaron; Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, the son of Seraiah, and Joakim, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, of the house of David, of

6) the line of Phares, of the tribe of Judah, who uttered wise sayings before Darius, the king of Persia, in the second year of his reign, in the month of Nisan, the first month.

7) These are those from Judah who went up after their sojourn in captivity, whom Nebuchadnezzar,

8) king of Babylon, had removed to Babylon, and who returned to Jerusalem and the rest of Judah, each one to his own town, going with Zerubbabel and Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Resaiah, Bigvai, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Reeliah, Rehum, and Baanah, their leaders;

9) the numbers of those of the nation, and their leaders: the descendants of Parosh, two thousand, one hundred and seventy-two; of the descendants of Shephatiah, four hundred and seventy-two;

10) the descendants of Arah, seven hundred and fifty-six;

11) the descendants of Pahath-moab, of the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two

12) thousand, eight hundred and twelve; the descendants of Elam, one thousand, two hundred and fifty-four; the descendants of Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five; the descendants of Chorbe, seven hundred and five;

13) the descendants of Binnui, six hundred and forty-eight; the descendants of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three; the descendants of Azgad, one thousand, three hundred and twenty-two;

14) the descendants of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-seven; the descendants of Bigvai, two thousand and sixty-six; the descendants of Adin, four hundred and fifty-four;

15) the descendants of Ater, the son of Hezekiah, ninety-two; the descendants of Azuru, four hundred and thirty-two;

16) the descendants of Annias, one hundred and one; the descendants of Arom: the descendants of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three; the descendants of Jorah,

17) one hundred and twelve; the descendants of Baiterus, three thousand and five; the descendants of Bethlehem, one

18) hundred and twenty-three; the men of Netophah, fifty-five; the men of Anathoth, one hundred and fifty-eight; the men of

19) Bethasmoth, forty-two; the men of Kirjath-jearim, twenty-five; the men of Chephirah and Beeroth, seven hundred and

20) forty-three; the Chadasans and Ammidians, four hundred and twenty-two; the men of Ramah and Geba, six hundred

21) and twenty-one; the men of Michmash, one hundred and twenty-two; the men of Bethel-Ai, fifty two; the descendants

22) of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six; the descendants of the other Elam and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five; the descendants of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five;

23) the descendants of Senaah, three thousand, three hundred and thirty.

24) Of the priests: the descendants of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, among the descendants of Anasib, nine hundred and seventy-two; the descendants of Immer, one thousand

25) and fifty-two; the descendants of Pashhur, one thousand, two hundred and forty-seven; the descendants of Harim, one thousand and seventeen.

26) Of the Levites: the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel

27) and Bannas and Sudias, seventy-four; of the sacred singers: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight; of the doorkeepers:

28) the descendants of Shallum, the descendants of Ater, the descendants of Tolman, the descendants of Akkub, the descendants of Hatita, the descendants of Shobai—in all, one hundred and thirty-nine.

29) Of the temple slaves: the descendants of Ziha, the descendants of Hasupha, the descendants of Tabbaoth, the descendants of Keros, the descendants of Siaha, the descendants of Padon, the descendants of Lebanah, the descendants of Hagab, the descendants of Shamlai, the descendants of Hanan, the descendants of Cathua, 31) the descendants of Gahar, the descendants of Reaiah, the descendants of Rezin, the descendants of Nekoda, the descendants of Chezib, the descendants of Gazzan, the descendants of Uzza, the descendants of Paseah, the descendants of Hasrah, the descendants of Besai, the descendants of Asnah, the descendants of the Meunites, the descendants of Nephisim, the descendants of Bakbuk, the descendants of Hakupha, the descendants of Asur, the descendants of Pharakim,

32) the descendants of Bazluth, the descendants of Mehida, the descendants of Cutha, the descendants of Charea, the descendants of Barkos, the descendants of Sisera, the descendants of Temah, the descendants of Neziah, the descendants of Hatipha.

33) Of the descendants of Solomon's servants: the descendants of Hassophereth, the descendants of Peruda, the descendants of Jaalah, the descendants of Lozon, the

34) descendants of Giddel, the descendants of Shephatiah, the descendants of Hattil, the descendants of Pochereth-hazzabaim, the descendants of Sarothie, the descendants of Masiah, the descendants of Gas, the descendants of Apherra, the descendants of Barodis, the descendants of Shaphat, the

35) descendants of Ami. In all, the temple slaves and the descendants of the servants of Solomon were three hundred and seventy-two.

36) These are those who went up from Telmelah and Telharsha, under the leadership of Cherub, Adan, and Immer,

37) but were not able to show by their families or lineage that they belonged to Israel: the descendants of Delaiah the descendant of Tobiah, the descendants of Nekoda,

38) six hundred and fifty-two. And of those of the priests who had assumed the priesthood but were not found registered: the descendants of Habaiah, the descendants of Hakkoz, the descendants of Jaddus who married Agia, one of the 39) daughters of Barzillai and was called by his name. And when the ancestry of these men was looked for in the register, and could not be found, they were excluded from

40) officiating as priests. And Nehemiah and the governor told them not to share in the consecrated things until a high priest should appear clothed in the Manifestation and the Truth.

41) In all, there were: of Israel, over twelve years of age, besides male and female slaves, forty-two thousand, three

42) hundred and sixty; of their male and female slaves, seven thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven; of musicians and

43) singers, two hundred and forty-five. There were four hundred and thirty-five camels, and seven thousand and thirty-six horses, two hundred and forty-five mules, and five thousand, five hundred and twenty-five asses.

44) And some of the principal heads of families, when they reached the temple of God in Jerusalem, vowed that they would erect the house in its old place, to the best of their ability,

45) and that they would give to the sacred building fund a thousand minas in gold and five thousand minas in silver, and a hundred priest's garments.

46) So the priests and the Levites and some of the people settled in Jerusalem and the country, and the sacred singers and the doorkeepers and all Israel settled in their villages.

47) When the seventh month came, and the Israelites were all at home, they gathered as one man in the square in front of the first gate toward the east.

48) And Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, and his brothers took their places and prepared the altar of the God of Israel,

49) in order to offer on it burnt offerings, as is directed in the book of Moses, the man of God.

50) And they were joined by some of the other peoples of the land, and they erected the altar in its place; for though they had been hostile to them, all the people in the land supported them, and brought sacrifices at the proper times, and the morning and evening burnt offerings for the Lord,

51) and they kept the Camping Out festival, as it is prescribed in the Law, and they brought sacrifices every day,

52) when it was proper, and besides these the regular offerings and sacrifices on Sabbaths and new moons and all the sacred festival days.

53) And all who had made voluntary gifts to God began to offer sacrifices to God, beginning with the

54) new moon of the seventh month, though the temple of God was not yet rebuilt. And they paid money to the masons

55) and carpenters, and gave food and drink and carts to the Sidonians and Tyrians, to bring cedar timbers from the Lebanon and convey them in rafts to the harbor of Joppa, as Cyrus, the king of Persia, had commanded them in writing.

56) In the second year Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, came to the temple of God in Jerusalem, and in the second month he began with Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and their brothers, and the Levitical priests and all who had come

57) back from the exile to Jerusalem, and they laid the foundation of the temple of God on the new moon of the second month, in the second year, after they came to Judah and Jerusalem.

58) And they appointed the Levites who were over twenty years older to have charge of the work of the Lord. And Jeshua rose up and his sons and his brothers and Kadmiel his brother and the sons of Jeshua Emadabun and the sons of Joda, the son of Iliadun, with their sons and brothers, all the Levites, as one man pressing forward the work on the house of God.

59) And the builders built the sanctuary of the Lord, and the priests stood in their robes, with musical instruments and trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with their

60) cymbals, praising the Lord and blessing him, according to

61) the directions of David, king of Israel, and they sang loudly, giving thanks to the Lord, with hymns, because all Israel

62) enjoy his goodness and his glory forever. And all the people sounded trumpets and gave a great shout, praising the

63) Lord for the erection of the house of the Lord. And some of the Levitical priests and the older men among the heads of their families, who had seen the house that preceded this one, came to the building of this house with outcries and

64) loud lamentation, while many came with trumpets and a

65) great shout of joy, so that the people could not hear the trumpets on account of the lamentation, for the multitude sounded the trumpets loudly, so that it was heard a long way off.

66) And when the enemies of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin heard it, they came to find out what the sound of the

67) trumpets meant. And they learned that those who had turned from captivity were building the sanctuary for the Lord, the God of Israel,

68) and they went to Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the heads of families, and said to them,

69) “We will help you build, for we, like you, obey your Lord, and have sacrificed to him from the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who brought us here.”

70) Then Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the heads of families of Israel said to them,

“It is not for your and us to build the house for the Lord our God,

71) for we will build it by ourselves for the Lord of Israel, as Cyrus, the king of Persia, has commanded us.”

72) But the heathen of the land pressed upon those who were in Judea, and, blockading them, hindered them from building,

73) and by making plots and stirring up the people and uprisings they prevented the completion of the building all the lifetime of King Cyrus. So they were kept from building for two years, until the reign of Darius.

6 But in the second year of the reign of Darius, the prophets of Haggai and Zechariah, the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judea and Jerusalem, prophesying to them in the name of the Lord, the God of Israel.

2) Then Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, and Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, got up and began to build the house of the Lord that was in Jerusalem, while the prophets of the Lord joined them and helped them.

3) At that very time there came to them Sisinnus, the governor of Syria and Phoenicia, and Sathrabuzanes and their companions, and said to them,

4) “By whose orders are you building this house, and completing its roof and all these other things? And who are the builders who are carrying this out?”

5) Still the elders of the Jews were shown favor, for the Lord

6) had regard for the captives, and they were not prevented from building until Darius was informed about them and orders were issued.

7) This is the copy of a letter which Sisinnus, the governor of Syria and Phoenicia, and Sathrabuzanes and their companions wrote and sent to Darius:

8) “Greetings to King Darius. Let it all be known to our lord the king that when we went to the country of Judea and entered the city of Jerusalem, we found the elders of the

9) Jews, who had been in captivity, building in the city of Jerusalem and great, new house for the Lord, of costly hewn

10) stone, with timbers set in the walls, and we found this work proceeding with haste, and the undertaking prospering in their hands, and being completed with all glory and diligence.

11) Then we inquired of these elders and said,

“ ‘At whose command are you building this house, and laying the foundations of these works?’

12) “Then in order to inform you and write to you, we inquired of them what men were the leaders, and asked them for a list of the names of those who were taking the lead.

13) And they answered and said,

“ ‘We are servants of the Lord who create the heaven and the earth.

14) And the house was built many years ago by a king of Israel who was great and strong, and was finished.

15) And when our forefathers sinned against the heavenly Lord of Israel and provoked him, he delivered them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the king of

16) the Chaldeans; and they tore the house down and burned it,

17) and carried the people away as captives to Babylon. But in the first year of the reign of Cyrus over Babylonia, Cyrus

18) the king wrote an order that this house rebuilt. And the sacred dishes of gold and silver that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from the house at Jerusalem, and set up in his own sanctuary, Cyrus the king brought forth again from the sanctuary in Babylon, and they were given to Zerubbabel

19) and Sheshbazzar, the governor, and he was instructed to carry all these dishes back and put them back and put them back in the sanctuary in Jerusalem, and that this sanctuary of the Lord should be rebuilt on the same spot.

20) Then this Sheshbazzar, after coming here, laid the foundations of the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, and although it has been under construction from then until now it has not reached completion.

21) Now therefore, if it meets your approval, O king, let search be made in the royal archives of our lord the king in Babylon,

22) and if it is found that the building of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem was done with the consent of the Lord in Jerusalem was done with the consent of Cyrus the king, and it meets the approval of our lord the king, let him give us orders about this.”

23) Then King Darius ordered a search to be made in the royal archives that were deposited in Babylon. And in the castle of Ecbatana, in the land of Media, was found a roll in which this was recorded:

24) “In the first year of the reign of Cyrus, King Cyrus ordered the rebuilding of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem,

25) where they sacrifice with perpetual fire; the height of it to be ninety feet, the width ninety feet, with three courses of hewn stone and a course of new native timber, and the

26) cost to be provided from the house of Cyrus the king; and that the sacred dishes of the house of the Lord, of gold and silver, which Nebuchadnezzar carried away from the house in Jerusalem and removed to Babylon, be restored to the

27) house in Jerusalem to be placed where they were.” And he further ordered that Sisinnes, the governor of Syria and Phoenicia, and Sathrabuzanes and their companions and the local governors appointed in Syria and Phoenicia should take care to let the place alone, and to permit Zerubbabel, the servant of the Lord and governor of Judea, and the elders of the Jews, to build the house of the Lord in its old place.

7 Then Sisinnes, the governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia, and Sathrabuzanes and their companions, obeying the

2) orders of Darius the king, looked after the holy work very attentively, assisting the elders of the Jews and the governors

3) of the temple. And the holy work progressed, while the prophets Haggai and Zechariah prophesied; and they completed

4) it at the command of the LORD, the God of Israel; and with the consent of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes,

5) the kings of Persia, the holy house was finished by the twenty-third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of

6) King Darius. And the Israelites and the priests and the rest of the returned exiles who had joined them did according to what was in the book of Moses. And they offered at the dedication of the temple of the LORD a hundred bulls, two
8) hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and twelve he-goats for the sin of all Israel, to correspond to the number of the
9) twelve princes of the tribes of Israel; and the priests and the Levites stood robed, by tribes, in charge of the service of the LORD God of Israel in accordance with the book of Moses, and the doorkeepers stood at each gate.
10) And the Israelites who had returned from exile held the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, for the
11) priests and the Levites had been purified together, but all the returned exiles had not been purified, for the Levites had
12) all been purified together, so they sacrificed the Passover for all the returned exiles and their brothers the priests and themselves.
13) And the Israelites who had returned from exile, all who had separated themselves from the accursed doings of the heathen of the land and sought the LORD, ate it.
14) And they observed the festival of Unleavened bread for seven days,
15) rejoicing before the LORD, because he had changed the attitude of the king of Assyria toward them, so as to strengthen their hands for the service of the LORD, the God of Israel.

8 Afterward, in the reign of Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, there came Ezra, the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah,
2) the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, the son of Amariah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, the son of Abishua, the son of Phineas, the son of
3) Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the chief priest. This Ezra came up from Babylon as a scribe, skilled in the law of Moses,

4) which was given by the God of Israel, and the king showed him honor, for he found favor before him in all that he asked.

5) And there came with him to Jerusalem some of the Israelites and the priests and Levites and holy singers and

6) doorkeepers and temple slaves, in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, in the fifth month (that was the king's seventh year); for they left Babylon on the new moon of the first month, and they reached Jerusalem on the new moon of the fifth month, so prosperous a journey had the

7) LORD given them for his sake. For Ezra possessed great knowledge, so that he neglected nothing that was in the Law of the LORD or the commandments, but taught all Israel all the statutes and ordinances.

8) Now the written commission came from Artaxerxes, the king, to Ezra, the priest and reader of the Law of the LORD, and the following is a copy of it:

9) "King Artaxerxes sends greeting to Ezra, the priest and

10) reader of the Law of the LORD. As I have taken a friendly attitude, I have given orders that those of the Jewish nation who wish to do so, and of the priests and Levites and of the others in our realm shall, if they choose to, go to Jerusalem

11) with you. So let all who think of doing so, set out with you,

12) as I and the seven friends and councilors have decided, to look into matters in Judea and Jerusalem, in accordance

13) with what is in the Law of the LORD, and to carry to the LORD of Israel in Jerusalem the gifts that I and the friends have promised; and that all the gold and silver that can be found in the country of Babylonia for the LORD in Jerusalem,

14) with what has been given by the nation for the temple of their LORD at Jerusalem be collected, both gold and silver for bulls and rams and lambs and the things incident to them,

15) so as to offer offerings upon the altar of their LORD that is

16) in Jerusalem. And all that you with your brothers wish to do with gold and silver carry out, according to the will of

17) your God, and deliver the sacred dishes of the LORD that have been given you for the use of the temple of your God

18) that is in Jerusalem. And anything else that occurs to you as necessary for the temple of your God, you are to give

19) from the royal treasury; and I, Artaxerxes the king, have commanded the treasurers of Syria and Phoenicia that whatever Ezra, the priest and reader of the Law of the Most High God,

20) sends for, they shall take care to give him, up to a hundred talents of silver, and likewise up to a hundred measures (fifteen hundred bushels) of wheat and a hundred measures (a thousand gallons) of wine and salt in abundance;

21) and let everything prescribed in the Law of God be scrupulously performed to the Most High God, so that wrath may not come upon the realm of the king and his sons.

22) You are also instructed to lay no tribute or any other tax upon any priests or Levites or sacred singers or porters or temple slaves or persons employed in this temple, and that no one has authority to lay any such tax upon them.

23) And you, Ezra, must appoint justices and judges to judge all through Syria and Phoenicia all who know the Law of your God;

24) and those who do not know it you must teach. And all who transgress the Law of your God and of the king will be suitably punished, either with death, or by some other punishment, a fine or imprisonment.”

25) Blessed be the only LORD, who put this into the king’s

26) heart, to glorify his house in Jerusalem, and gave me honor in the sight of the king and his councilors and all his friends and grandees.

27) So I was encouraged by the help of the LORD, my God, and I gathered men from Israel to go up with me.

28) These are the principal men, by their families and their groups who came up with me from Babylon, in the reign of

29) Artaxerxes the king: of the descendants of Phineas, Gershoml of the descendants of Ithamar, Gamael; of the descendants of David,

30) Hattush, the son of Shecaniah; of the descendants of Parosh, Zechariah, and with him a hundred

31) and fifty men enrolled; of the descendants of Pahath-moab, Eliohenai, the son of Zerariah, and with him two hundred men; of the descendants of Zattu, Shecaniah, the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred men; of the descendants of Adin, Obed, the son of Jonathan, and with him

32) two hundred and fifty men; of the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiiah, the son of Gotholiah, and with him seventy men;

33) of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zeraiah, the son of

34) Michael, and with him seventy men; of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah, the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred

35) and twelve men; of the descendants of Bani, Shelomith, the son of Josiphiah, and with him a hundred and

36) sixty men; of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah, the son

37) of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight men; of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan, the son of Hakkatan, and with him a

38) hundred and ten men; of the descendants of Adonikam, those who came last and these were their names: Eliphelet,

39) Jeuel, and Shemaiah, and with them seventy men; and of the descendants of Bigvai, Uthai, the son of Istalcurus, and with him seventy men.

40) So I assembled them at the river called Theras, and we

41) camped there for three days, and I observed them. And when I found none of the descendants of the priests or of the

42) Levites there, I sent to Eleazar and Idueh and Maasmas

43) and Elnathan and Shemaiah and Jarib, Nathan, Elnathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were leaders and intelligent men,

44) and I told them to go to Iddo, who was in command

45) at the place of the treasury, and ordered them to tell Iddo and his kinsmen and the treasurers at that place to

46) send us men to serve as priests in the house of our LORD. And by the mighty hand of our LORD they brought us competent men of the descendants of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel, Sherebiah and his sons and his kinsmen, eighteen

47) in all; and Hashabiah and with him Jeshaiiah, his brother, of the descendants of Hananiah, and his sons, making

48) twenty men; and of the temple slaves, whom David and the princes had given to work for the Levites, two hundred and twenty temple slaves; their names were all listed.

49) Then I proclaimed a fast there for the young men before our LORD, to seek from him a safe journey for us and our

50) children and our cattle that were with us. For I was ashamed to ask the king for foot soldiers and cavalry and an

51) escort to make use safe from those who opposed us; for we had told the king,

“The power of our LORD will be with those who seek him, and will give them every support.”

52) And we prayed to our LORD again about these things, and

53) we found Him merciful. Then I set apart twelve men of the chiefs of the priests, Sherebiah and Hashabiah, and ten of

54) their kinsmen with them, and I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the sacred dishes, of the house of our LORD, which the king himself and his councilors and the

55) grandees of all Israel had given. And I weighed and turned over to them six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver dishes to the value of a hundred talents, and a hundred

56) talents of gold, and twenty gold bowls, and twelve bronze

57) dishes of fine bronze that glittered like gold. And I said to them,

“You are holy to the LORD and the dishes are holy, and the silver and gold are a gift to the LORD, the LORD of our forefathers.

58) Be watchful and guard them until you deliver them to the chiefs of the priests and the Levites and to the heads of the families of Israel in Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of our LORD.”

59) And the priests and the Levites took the silver and the gold and the dishes which had been in Jerusalem, and carried them into the temple of the LORD.

60) And we set out from the river Theras on the twelfth day the first month, and entered Jerusalem, because the mighty hand of our LORD was upon us, and He saved us from

61) every enemy on the way, and we reached Jerusalem. And when our third day there came, the silver and gold were weighed and turned over in the house of our LORD to Meremoth,

62) the son of Uriah, the priest, who had with him Eleazar, the son of Phineas, and they had with them Jozabad, the son of Jeshua, and Moeth, the son of Binnui, the

63) Levites; it was all counted and weighed, and the total

64) weight of it was immediately recorded. And those who had come back from captivity offered as sacrifices to the LORD, the God of Israel, twelve bulles for all Israel, ninety-six

65) rams, seventy-two lambs, twelve he-goats for a

66) thank-offering—all as a sacrifice to the LORD. And they delivered the king's orders to the royal treasurers and to the governors of Coelesyria and Phoenicia, and they showed honor to the people and the temple of the LORD.

67) When this was accomplished, the principal men came to me and said,

68) "The people of Israel and the leaders and the priests and the Levites have not separated from the alien hethen of the land and the impurities of them, the Canaanites and Hitties and Perizzites and Jebusites and Moabites and Egyptians
69) and Idumaeans, for they and their sons have married their daughters, and the holy race has been mixed with the alien heathen of the land, and from the beginning of this matter, the princes and nobles have shared in this iniquity."

70) As soon as I heard this, I tore open my clothes and my sacred mantle, and pulled out some of my hair and beard,

71) and sat down gloomy and grieved. And all who were moved at the word of the LORD of Israel gather about me, as I grieved over this iniquity, and I sat grief-stricken until the

72) evening sacrifice. Then I got up from my fast with my clothes and my sacred mantle torn, and I knelt down and

73) stretched out my hands to the LORD, and said,

74) "LORD, I am ashamed, I am abashed before You. For from the times of our forefathers, our sins have risen higher than our heads, and our mistakes have mounted up to

75) heaven, and we have been involved in grievous sin, even to

76) this day. And because of our sins and those of our forefathers, we have been delivered with our brothers and our kings and our priests to the kings of the earth, to be slain and

77) taken captive and plundered, in shame, unto this day. And yet how great has been Your mercy to us, LORD, that a root and a name should be left to us in the place of

78) Your sanctuary, and that a light has been disclosed to us in the house of our LORD, and that food is given us in the time of our bondage.

79) Even in our bondage we have not been forsaken by our LORD, but He has brought us into favor with the

80) kings of Persia, so that they have given us food and glorified the temple of our LORD, and raised Zion up from its desolation, to give us a stronghold in Judea and Jerusalem.

81) And now, LORD, what can we say, when we have these things? For we have disobeyed Your commands, which You gave through Your servants the prophets, when You said,

82) 'The land which you enter to possess is a land that has been polluted with the pollution of the aliens of the land, and they have filled it with their impurity.

83) So now you must not marry your daughters to their sons, and you must not take

84) their daughters for your sons; and you must not seek ever to have peace with them, so that you may grow strong and eat the good things of the land, and bequeath it to your descendants forever.'

85) And all that has happened to us has happened because of our wicked deeds and our great sins.

86) For You, LORD, have lightened our sins, and have given us such a root as this, but we have turned back again, to transgress Your law, to mingle with the impurity of the heathen

87) of the land. Are You not angry enough with us to destroy us,
88) until there is left no root or stock or name of ours? LORD
89) of Israel, You are true; for we are left, a root, today. Now here we are before You,
in all our iniquity, for in view of it we cannot any longer stand before You.”

90) Now while Ezra was praying and making his confession, lying on the ground
before the temple weeping, there gathered about him an immense throng from
Jerusalem, men, women, and children, for there was great lamentation

91) among the multitude. And Shecaniah, the son of Jehiel, one of the Israelites,
called out and said to Ezra,

“We have sinned against the LORD, and have married foreign women from
the heathen of the land, yet there is

92) still hope for Israel. Let us make oath to the LORD about this, that we will expel
all our wives who are of foreign

93) origin, with their children, as you and all who obey the Law of the LORD decide.

94) Get up and take action, for it is your business, and we will support you in taking
vigorous action.”

95) Then Ezra got up, and made the chiefs of the priests and Levites of all Israel
swear to do this, and they swore to it.

9 Then Ezra got up from the court of the temple, and went to

2) the priestly chamber of Jehohanan, the son of Eliashib, and spent the night, and he
would not eat bread or drink water,

3) but mourned over the great iniquity of the multitude. And a proclamation was
made all over Judea and Jerusalem to all who had returned from the captivity that
they should

4) gather in Jerusalem; and if anyone failed to meet there within two or three days
in accordance with the decision of the ruling elders, his cattle should be confiscated,
and he should be excluded from the multitude of those who had returned from exile.

5) And the men of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin gathered in three days at Jerusalem (it was the ninth month, on the
6) twentieth day of the month), and all the multitude sat in the square before the temple, trembling because of the
7) winter weather. And Ezra got up and said to them,
 “You have broken the Law, and have married foreign women, to increase Israel’s sins.
8) Now make your confession
9) and give glory to the LORD God of our forefathers, and do His will, and separate from the heathen of the land and from the foreign women.”
10) Then all the multitude shouted and said in a loud voice,
11) “We will do as you say. But the crowd is great and it is wintertime, and we are not able to stand out-of-doors, and cannot do so, and this is not a thing we can do in a day or two, for we have sinned too much in this matter.
12) So let the princes of the people remain, and let all those in our settlements that have foreign wives come at the times appointed,
13) with the elders and judges of each place, until we free ourselves from the LORD’s wrath over this matter.”
14) Jonathan, the son of Asahel, and Jahzeiah, the son of Tikvah, undertook the matter on these terms, and
15) Meshullam and Levi and Shabbethai sat with them as judges. And the returned exiles acted in accordance with all this.
16) And Ezra the priest picked out for himself the leading men of their families, all of them by name, and on the new moon of the tenth month they held a sitting to inquire into the matter.
17) And the case of the men who had foreign wives was brought to an end by the new moon of the first month.
18) And among the priests the ones who presented themselves
19) who were found to have foreign wives were: of the descendants of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brothers:

20) Maaseiah and Eleazar and Jarib and Jodan; they pledged themselves to cast off their wives, and gave rams in atonement for their mistake.

21) And of the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah and Maaseiah and Shemaiah and

22) Jehiel and Azariah. And of the descendants of Pashur: Elionai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, and Nathanael, Gedaliah, and Elasah.

23) And of the Levites: Jozabad and Shimei and Kelaiah,

24) who was Kelita, and Pethahiah and Judah and Jonah. And

25) of the sacred singers: Eliashib and Zaccur. Of the porters: Shallum and Telem.

26) Of Israel: of the descendants of Parosh, Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, and Eleazar, and Asibias, and

27) Benaiah; of the descendants of Elam, Mattaniah, and Zechariah,

28) Jehiel and Abdi, and Jeremoth and Elijah. And of the descendants of Zattu, Elioenai, Eliashib, Othoniah,

29) Jeremoth, and Zabad and Zerdaiah. And of the descendants of Bebai, Jehohanan and Hananiah and Zabbai

30) and Emathis; and of the descendants of Bani: Meshullam,

31) Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal and Jeremoth. And of the descendants of Addi: Naathus and Moossias, Laccunus and Naidus, and Bescasasmys and Sesthel, and Balnuus

32) and Manasseas. And of the descendants of Annan: Elionas and Asaias and Melchias and Sabbaias and Simon Chosamaeus.

33) And of the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai and Mattattah and Zabad and Eliphelet and Manasseh and Shimei.

34) And of the descendants of Bani: Jeremai, Maadai, Amram, Joel, Mamdai and Bedeiah and Vaniah, Carabasion and Eliashib and Machnadebai, Eliasis, Binnui, Elialis, Shimei, Shelemiah, Nethaniah. And of the descendants of Ezora: Shashai, Azarel, Azael, Shemaiah,

35) Amariah, Joseph. And of the descendants of Nebo: Mattithiah

36) Zabad, Iddo, Joel, Benaiah. These had all married foreign women, and they cast them off with their children.

37) So the priests and the Levites and the men of Israel settled in Jerusalem and in the country. On the new moon of the seventh month, when the Israelites were in their communities,

38) the whole multitude gathered under a common impulse

39) in the square before the east gate of the temple and told Ezra, the high priest and reader, to bring the Law of Moses, which had been give him by the LORD, the God of Israel.

40) And Ezra, the high priest, brought the Law for all the multitude, men and women, and all the priests to hear, on the new moon of the seventh month.

41) And he read aloud in the square before the gate of the temple from morning till noon, in the presence of both men and women, and the

42) whole multitude gave attention to the Law. And Ezra, the priest and reader of the Law, stood in the wooden pulpit

43) which had been prepared, and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Azariah, Uriah, Hezekiah,

44) and Baalsamus, at his right, and at his left, Pedaiah, Mishael,

45) Malchijah, Lothasubus, Nabariah, and Zechariah. Then Ezra took up the book of the Law before the multitude, for

46) he was seated in a conspicuous place before them all, and when he opened the Law, they all stood up. And Ezra blessed the LORD, the Most High God, the God of Hosts, the Almighty,

47) and all the multitude shouted "Amen." And they lifted up their hands and fell on the ground, and worshipped the LORD.

48) Jeshua and Anniuth and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Masseiah and Kelita, Azariah and Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiiah, the Levites, taught the Law of the LORD, and read the Law of the LORD to the multitude, putting life into the reading.

49) Then the governor said to Ezra, the high priest and reader, and to the Levites who were teaching the multitude, to all,

50) "This day is sacred to the LORD" (and they were all weeping as they heard the Law)

51) “so go and eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions to those who have none,

52) for the day is sacred to the LORD. Do not mourn, for the LORD will honor you.”

53) And the Levites commanded all the people, saying,

“This day is sacred; do not mourn.”

54) And they all went off to eat and drink and enjoy themselves, and to give portions to those who had none, and to

55) hold a great celebration, for they had been inspired by the words which they had been taught, and for which they had come together.