Ezra

1 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to
fulfill the word of the LORD spoken through
Jeremiah, the LORD stirred the spirit of Cyrus
king of Persia to send a proclamation
throughout his kingdom and to put it in writing
as follows:
2 “This is what Cyrus king of Persia says:
‘The LORD, the God of heaven, who has given
me all the kingdoms of the earth, has appointed
me to build a house for him at Jerusalem in
Judah.
3 Whoever among you belongs to his people,
may his God be with him, and may he go to
Jerusalem in Judah and build the house of the
LORD, the God of Israel; he is the God who is in
Jerusalem.
4 And let every survivor, wherever he lives, be
assisted by the men of that region with silver,
gold, goods, and livestock, along with a freewill
offering for the house of God in Jerusalem.’ ”
5 So the family heads of Judah and Benjamin,
along with the priests and Levites—everyone
whose spirit God had stirred—prepared to go up
and rebuild the house of the LORD in Jerusalem.
6 And all their neighbors supported them with
articles of silver and gold, with goods and
livestock, and with valuables, in addition to all
their freewill offerings.

7 King Cyrus also brought out the articles
belonging to the house of the LORD that
Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from
Jerusalem and placed in the temple of his gods.
8 Cyrus king of Persia had them brought out
by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, who
counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of
Judah.*
9 This was the inventory:

30 gold basins,†
1,000 silver basins,
29 utensils,
10 30 gold bowls,
410 matching silver bowls,
and 1,000 other articles.

11 In all, there were 5,400 gold and silver
articles. Sheshbazzar brought all these along
when the exiles went up from Babylon to
Jerusalem.

2

1 Now these are the people of the province
who came up from the captivity of the exiles
carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar its
king. They returned to Jerusalem and Judah,
each to his own town,

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* **1:8 1:8** That is, the leader of the exiles returning to Judah † **1:9 1:9** Or *dishes*; twice in this verse

2 accompanied by Zerubbabel, Jeshua,
Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan,
Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.*
This is the count of the men of Israel:

3 the descendants of Parosh, 2,172;
4 the descendants of Shephatiah, 372;
5 the descendants of Arah, 775;
6 the descendants of Pahath-moab (through
the line of Jeshua and Joab), 2,812;
7 the descendants of Elam, 1,254;
8 the descendants of Zattu, 945;
9 the descendants of Zaccai, 760;
10 the descendants of Bani,† 642;
11 the descendants of Bebai, 623;
12 the descendants of Azgad, 1,222;
13 the descendants of Adonikam, 666;
14 the descendants of Bigvai, 2,056;
15 the descendants of Adin, 454;
16 the descendants of Ater (through Hezekiah),
98;
17 the descendants of Bezai, 323;
18 the descendants of Jorah,‡ 112;
19 the descendants of Hashum, 223;
20 the descendants of Gibbar,§ 95;
21 the men* of Bethlehem, 123;

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* **2:2 2:2** Parallel text at Nehemiah 7:7 *accompanied by Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah* † **2:10 2:10** *Bani* is a variant of *Binnui*; see Nehemiah 7:15. ‡ **2:18 2:18** *Jorah* is a variant of *Hariph*; see Nehemiah 7:24. § **2:20 2:20** *Gibbar* is a variant of *Gibeon*; see Nehemiah 7:25. * **2:21 2:21** Literally *the sons*; here and in verses 25, 26, 33, and 34

22 the men of Netophah, 56;
23 the men of Anathoth, 128;
24 the descendants of Azmaveth,† 42;
25 the men of Kiriath-arim,‡ Chephirah, and
Beeroth, 743;
26 the men of Ramah and Geba, 621;
27 the men of Michmash, 122;
28 the men of Bethel and Ai, 223;
29 the descendants of Nebo, 52;
30 the descendants of Magbish, 156;
31 the descendants of the other Elam,§ 1,254;
32 the descendants of Harim, 320;
33 the men of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 725;
34 the men of Jericho, 345;
35 and the descendants of Senaah, 3,630.
36 The priests:

The descendants of Jedaiah (through the
house of Jeshua), 973;
37 the descendants of Immer, 1,052;
38 the descendants of Pashhur, 1,247;
39 and the descendants of Harim, 1,017.
40 The Levites:

the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel
(through the line of Hodaviah*), 74.
41 The singers:

the descendants of Asaph, 128.

† **2:24 2:24** *Azmaveth* is a variant of *Beth-azmaveth*; see Nehemiah 7:28. ‡ **2:25 2:25** LXX (see also Nehemiah 7:29) *Kiriath-jearim* § **2:31 2:31** Or *of West Elam* * **2:40 2:40** *Hodaviah* is a variant of *Hodevah*; see Nehemiah 7:43.

42 The gatekeepers:

the descendants of Shallum,
the descendants of Ater,
the descendants of Talmon,
the descendants of Akkub,
the descendants of Hatita,
and the descendants of Shobai,
139 in all.
43 The temple servants:†

the descendants of Ziha,
the descendants of Hasupha,
the descendants of Tabbaoth,
44 the descendants of Keros,
the descendants of Siaha,‡
the descendants of Padon,
45 the descendants of Lebanah,
the descendants of Hagabah,
the descendants of Akkub,
46 the descendants of Hagab,
the descendants of Shalmai,§
the descendants of Hanan,
47 the descendants of Giddel,
the descendants of Gahar,
the descendants of Reaiah,
48 the descendants of Rezin,
the descendants of Nekoda,
the descendants of Gazzam,
49 the descendants of Uzza,
the descendants of Paseah,

† **2:43 2:43** Hebrew *The Nethinim*; also in verses 58 and 70
‡ **2:44 2:44** *Siaha* is a variant of *Sia*; see Nehemiah 7:47.
§ **2:46 2:46** Qere (see also Nehemiah 7:48); Ketiv *Shamlai*

the descendants of Besai,
50 the descendants of Asnah,
the descendants of Meunim,
the descendants of Nephusim,*
51 the descendants of Bakbuk,
the descendants of Hakupha,
the descendants of Harhur,
52 the descendants of Bazluth,†
the descendants of Mehida,
the descendants of Harsha,
53 the descendants of Barkos,
the descendants of Sisera,
the descendants of Temah,
54 the descendants of Neziah,
and the descendants of Hatipha.
55 The descendants of the servants of Solomon:

the descendants of Sotai,
the descendants of Hassophereth,
the descendants of Peruda,‡
56 the descendants of Jaala,
the descendants of Darkon,
the descendants of Giddel,
57 the descendants of Shephatiah,
the descendants of Hattil,
the descendants of Pochereth-hazzebaim,
and the descendants of Ami.§
58 The temple servants and descendants of the servants of Solomon numbered 392 in all.

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* **2:50 2:50** *Nephusim* is a variant of *Nephushesim*; see Nehemiah 7:52. † **2:52 2:52** *Bazluth* is a variant of *Bazlith*; see Nehemiah 7:54. ‡ **2:55 2:55** *Peruda* is a variant of *Perida*; see Nehemiah 7:57. § **2:57 2:57** *Ami* is a variant of *Amon*; see Nehemiah 7:59.

59 The following came up from Tel-melah,
Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan,* and Immer, but
they could not prove that their families were
descended from Israel:

60 the descendants of Delaiah,
the descendants of Tobiah,
and the descendants of Nekoda,
652 in all.

61 And from among the priests: the
descendants of Hobaiah,
the descendants of Hakkoz,
and the descendants of Barzillai (who had
married a daughter of Barzillai the Gileadite
and was called by their name).

62 These men searched for their family
records, but they could not find them and so
were excluded from the priesthood as
unclean.
63 The governor ordered them not to eat the
most holy things until there was a priest to
consult the Urim and Thummim.†
64 The whole assembly numbered 42,360,
65 in addition to their 7,337 male and female
slaves, as well as their 200 male and female
singers.
66 They had 736 horses, 245 mules,
67 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.
68 When they arrived at the house of the LORD
in Jerusalem, some of the heads of the families

* **2:59 2:59** *Addan* is a variant of *Addon*; see Nehemiah 7:61.
† **2:63 2:63** Literally *Lights and Perfections*

gave freewill offerings to rebuild the house of
God on its original site.
69 According to their ability, they gave to the
treasury for this work 61,000 gold drachmas,‡
5,000 minas of silver,§ and 100 priestly
garments.
70 So the priests, the Levites, the singers, the
gatekeepers, and the temple servants, along
with some of the people, settled in their own
towns; and all Israel* settled in their towns.

3

1 By the seventh month, the Israelites had
settled in their towns, and the people assembled
as one man in Jerusalem.
2 Then Jeshua son of Jozadak* and his fellow
priests, along with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel
and his associates, began to build the altar of the
God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, as
it is written in the Teaching of Moses the man of
God.
3 They set up the altar on its foundation and
sacrificed burnt offerings on it to the
LORD—both the morning and evening burnt
offerings—even though they feared the people
of the land.

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‡ **2:69 2:69** Or *61,000 darics of gold*; that is, approximately 1,129.7 pounds or 512.4 kilograms of gold coins § **2:69 2:69** *5,000 minas* is approximately 3.14 tons or 2.85 metric tons of silver. * **2:70 2:70** Or *the rest of the Israelites* * **3:2 3:2** *Jozadak* is a variant of *Jehozadak*; also in verse 8; see 1 Chronicles 5:40.

4 They also celebrated the Feast of Booths† in
accordance with what is written, and they
offered burnt offerings daily based on the
number prescribed for each day.
5 After that, they presented the regular burnt
offerings and those for New Moons and for all
the appointed sacred feasts of the LORD, as well
as all the freewill offerings brought to the LORD.
6 On the first day of the seventh month, the
Israelites began to offer burnt offerings to the
LORD, although the foundation of the temple of
the LORD had not been laid.
7 They gave money to the masons and
carpenters, and food and drink and oil to the
people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs
from Lebanon to Joppa by sea, as authorized by
Cyrus king of Persia.
8 In the second month of the second year after
they had arrived at the house of God in
Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua
son of Jozadak, and the rest of their associates
including the priests, the Levites, and all who
had returned to Jerusalem from the captivity,
began the work. They appointed Levites twenty
years of age or older to supervise the
construction of the house of the LORD.
9 So Jeshua and his sons and brothers,
Kadmiel and his sons (descendants of

† **3:4 3:4** That is, Sukkot, the autumn feast of pilgrimage to Jerusalem; also translated as *the Feast of Tabernacles* or *the Feast of Shelters* and originally called *the Feast of Ingathering* (see Exodus 23:16 and Exodus 34:22).

Yehudah),‡ and the sons of Henadad and their
sons and brothers—all Levites—joined together
to supervise those working on the house of God.

10 When the builders had laid the foundation
of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their
apparel with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons
of Asaph) with cymbals, took their positions to
praise the LORD, as David king of Israel had
prescribed.
11 And they sang responsively with praise and
thanksgiving to the LORD:

"For he is good;
for his loving devotion§ to Israel endures
forever."

Then all the people gave a great shout of
praise to the LORD, because the foundation of
the house of the LORD had been laid.
12 But many of the older priests, Levites, and
family heads who had seen the first temple wept
loudly when they saw the foundation of this
temple. Still, many others shouted joyfully.
13 The people could not distinguish the shouts
of joy from the sound of weeping, because the
people were making so much noise. And the
sound was heard from afar.

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‡ **3:9 3:9** Hebrew *sons of Judah*; that is, most likely, *sons of Yehudah*, another name for *Hodevah* or *Hodaviah*; see Ezra 2:40 and Nehemiah 7:43. § **3:11 3:11** Forms of the Hebrew *chesed* are translated here and in most cases throughout the Scriptures as *loving devotion*; the range of meaning includes *love*, *goodness*, *kindness*, *faithfulness*, and *mercy*, as well as *loyalty to a covenant*.

4

1 When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin
heard that the exiles were building a temple for
the LORD, the God of Israel,
2 they approached Zerubbabel and the heads
of the families, saying, “Let us build with you
because, like you, we seek your God and have
been sacrificing to him* since the time of King
Esar-haddon of Assyria, who brought us here.”
3 But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the other heads
of the families of Israel replied, “You have no
part with us in building a house for our God,
since we alone must build it for the LORD, the
God of Israel, as Cyrus king of Persia has
commanded us.”
4 Then the people of the land set out to
discourage the people of Judah and make them
afraid to build.
5 They hired counselors against them to
frustrate their plans throughout the reign of
Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of
Darius king of Persia.
6 At the beginning of the reign of Ahasuerus,†
an accusation was lodged against the people of
Judah and Jerusalem.
7 And in the days of Artaxerxes king of Persia,
Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of his
associates‡ wrote a letter to Artaxerxes. It was
written in Aramaic and then translated.§

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* **4:2 4:2** Qere; Ketiv *have not been sacrificing* † **4:6 4:6** Generally identified as Xerxes I of Persia ‡ **4:7 4:7** Qere; Ketiv *his associate* § **4:7 4:7** The original text of Ezra 4:8 through Ezra 6:18 is in Aramaic.

8 Rehum the commander and Shimshai the
scribe wrote the letter against Jerusalem to King
Artaxerxes as follows:
9 From Rehum the commander, Shimshai the
scribe, and the rest of their associates—the
judges and officials over Tripolis, Persia, Erech
and Babylon, the Elamites of Susa,
10 and the rest of the peoples whom the great
and honorable Ashurbanipal* deported and
settled in the city† of Samaria and elsewhere
west of the Euphrates.‡
11 (This is the text of the letter they sent to
him.)
To King Artaxerxes,
From your servants, the men west of the
Euphrates:
12 Let it be known to the king that the Jews
who came from you to us have returned to
Jerusalem and are rebuilding that rebellious
and wicked city. They are restoring its walls and
repairing its foundations.
13 Let it now be known to the king that if that
city is rebuilt and its walls are restored, they
will not pay tribute, duty, or toll, and the royal
treasury will suffer.
14 Now because the salt of the palace is our
salt§ and it is not fitting for us to allow the king
to be dishonored, we have sent to inform the
king

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* **4:10 4:10** Aramaic *Osnappar*, another name for *Ashurbanipal*
† **4:10 4:10** LXX *cities* ‡ **4:10 4:10** Aramaic *beyond the River*; also in verses 11, 16, 17, and 20 § **4:14 4:14** Or *because we are in the service of the palace*

15 that a search should be made of the record
books of your fathers. In these books you will
discover and verify that the city is a rebellious
city, harmful to kings and provinces, inciting
sedition from ancient times. That is why this
city was destroyed.
16 We advise the king that if this city is rebuilt
and its walls are restored, you will have no
dominion west of the Euphrates.
17 Then the king sent this reply:
To Rehum the commander, Shimshai the
scribe, and the rest of your associates living in
Samaria and elsewhere in the region west of the
Euphrates:
Greetings.
18 The letter you sent us has been translated
and read in my presence.
19 I issued a decree, and a search was
conducted. It was discovered that this city has
revolted against kings from ancient times,
engaging in rebellion and sedition.
20 And mighty kings have ruled over
Jerusalem and exercised authority over the
whole region west of the Euphrates; and tribute,
duty, and toll were paid to them.
21 Now, therefore, issue an order for these
men to stop, so that this city will not be rebuilt
until I so order.
22 See that you do not neglect this matter. Why
allow this threat to increase and the royal
interests to suffer?
23 When the text of the letter from King
Artaxerxes was read to Rehum, Shimshai the

scribe, and their associates, they went
immediately to the Jews in Jerusalem and
forcibly stopped them.
24 Thus the construction of the house of God in
Jerusalem ceased, and it remained at a standstill
until the second year of the reign of Darius king
of Persia.

5

1 Later, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah
son of Iddo prophesied to the Jews 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* rose up and began to rebuild the
house of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of
God were with them, helping them.
3 At that time Tattenai the governor of the
region west of the Euphrates,† Shethar-bozenai,
and their associates went to the Jews and asked,
"Who authorized you to rebuild this temple and
restore this structure?"
4 Then we told them,‡ "What are the names of
the men who are constructing this building?"
5 But the eye of their God was on the elders of
the Jews, so that they were not stopped until a
report was sent to Darius and written
instructions about this matter were returned.
6 This is the text of the letter that Tattenai the
governor of the region west of the Euphrates,

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* **5:2 5:2** *Jozadak* is a variant of *Jehozadak*; see 1 Chronicles 5:40.
† **5:3 5:3** Aramaic *the governor beyond the River*; also in verse 6
‡ **5:4 5:4** LXX and Syriac *They also asked,*

Shethar-bozenai, and their associates, the
officials in the region, sent to King Darius.
7 The report they sent him read as follows:

To King Darius:

All peace.

8 Let it be known to the king that we went into
the province of Judah, to the house of the great
God. The people are rebuilding it with large
stones and placing timbers in the walls. This
work is being carried out diligently and is
prospering in their hands.

9 So we questioned the elders and asked, “Who
authorized you to rebuild this temple and
restore this structure?”

10 We also asked for their names, so that we
could write down the names of their leaders§
for your information.

11 And this is the answer they returned:

“We are servants of the God of heaven and
earth, and we are rebuilding the temple that
was built many years ago, which a great king of
Israel built and completed.

12 But since our fathers angered the God of
heaven, he delivered them into the hand of
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean
who destroyed this temple and carried away the
people to Babylon.

13 In the first year of his reign, however, Cyrus
king of Babylon issued a decree to rebuild this
house of God.

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§ **5:10 5:10** Aramaic *the names of the men at their heads*

14 He also removed from the temple* of
Babylon the gold and silver articles belonging to
the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had
taken and carried there from the temple in
Jerusalem. King Cyrus gave these articles to a
man named Sheshbazzar, whom he appointed
governor
15 and instructed, 'Take these articles, put
them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the
house of God be rebuilt on its original site.'
16 So this Sheshbazzar came and laid the
foundation of the house of God in Jerusalem,
and from that time until now it has been under
construction, but it has not yet been completed."
17 Now, therefore, if it pleases the king, let a
search be made of the royal archives in Babylon
to see if King Cyrus did indeed issue a decree to
rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem. Then let
the king send us his decision in this matter.

6

1 Thus King Darius ordered a search of the
archives stored in the treasury of Babylon.
2 And a scroll was found in the fortress of
Ecbatana, in the province of Media, with the
following written on it:
Memorandum:
3 In the first year of King Cyrus, he issued a
decree concerning the house of God in
Jerusalem:
Let the house be rebuilt as a place for offering
sacrifices, and let its foundations be firmly laid.

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* **5:14 5:14** Or *palace*

It is to be sixty cubits high and sixty cubits
wide,*
4 with three layers of cut stones and a layer of
new timber.† The costs are to be paid from the
royal treasury.
5 Furthermore, the gold and silver articles of
the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took
from the temple in Jerusalem and carried to
Babylon, must also be returned to the temple in
Jerusalem and deposited in the house of God.
6 Now therefore,
Tattenai governor of the region west of the
Euphrates,‡ Shethar-bozenai, and your
associates and officials in the region,
you must stay away from that place!
7 Leave this work on the house of God alone.
Let the governor and elders of the Jews rebuild
this house of God on its original site.
8 I hereby decree what you must do for these
elders of the Jews who are rebuilding this house
of God:
The cost is to be paid in full to these men from
the royal treasury out of the taxes of the
provinces west of the Euphrates, so that the
work will not be hindered.
9 Whatever is needed—young bulls, rams, and
lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven,
as well as wheat, salt, wine, and oil, as requested

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* **6:3** **6:3** The house was to be approximately 90 feet or 27.4 meters in height and width; Syriac (see also 1 Kings 6:2) *It is to be sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high.* † **6:4** **6:4** LXX *and one layer of timber* ‡ **6:6** **6:6** Aramaic *governor beyond the River*; similarly in verses 8 and 13

by the priests in Jerusalem—must be given to
them daily without fail.
10 Then they will be able to offer sacrifices of a
sweet aroma to the God of heaven and to pray
for the lives of the king and his sons.
11 I also decree that if any man interferes with
this directive, a beam is to be torn from his
house and raised up, and he is to be impaled on
it. And his own house shall be made a pile of
rubble for this offense.§
12 May God, who has caused his Name to dwell
there, overthrow any king or people who lifts a
hand to alter this decree or to destroy this house
of God in Jerusalem.
I, Darius, have issued the decree. Let it be
carried out with diligence.
13 In response, Tattenai the governor of the
region west of the Euphrates, Shethar-bozenai,
and their associates diligently carried out what
King Darius had decreed.
14 So the Jewish elders built and prospered
through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet
and Zechariah son of Iddo.
They finished building according to the
command of the God of Israel and the decrees of
Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia.
15 And this temple was completed on the third
day of the month of Adar,* in the sixth year of
the reign of King Darius.

§ **6:11** **6:11** Literally *shall be made a dunghill because of this*
* **6:15** **6:15** *Adar* is the twelfth month of the Hebrew lunar calendar, usually occurring within the months of February and March.

16 Then the people of Israel—the priests, the
Levites, and the rest of the exiles—celebrated
the dedication of the house of God with joy.

17 For the dedication of the house of God they
offered a hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four
hundred lambs, and a purification offering for
all Israel of twelve male goats, one for each tribe
of Israel.

18 They also appointed the priests by their
divisions and the Levites by their groups to the
service of God in Jerusalem, according to what is
written in the Book of Moses.

19 On the fourteenth day of the first month, the
exiles kept the Passover.

20 All the priests and Levites had purified
themselves and were ceremonially clean.

And the Levites slaughtered the Passover
lamb for all the exiles, for their priestly
brothers, and for themselves.

21 The Israelites who had returned from exile
ate it, together with all who had separated
themselves from the uncleanness of the nations†
of the land to seek the LORD, the God of Israel.

22 For seven days they kept the Feast of
Unleavened Bread‡ with joy, because the LORD
had made them joyful and turned the heart of
the king of Assyria toward them to strengthen
their hands in the work on the house of the God
of Israel.

† **6:21 6:21** Or *peoples* ‡ **6:22 6:22** That is, the seven-day period after the Passover during which no leaven may be eaten; see Exodus 12:14–20.

7

1 After these things,* during the reign of
Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah,
the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah,
2 the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son
of Ahitub,
3 the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the
son of Meraioth,
4 the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son
of Bukki,
5 the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the
son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief
priest—
6 this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a
scribe skilled in the Teaching of Moses, which
the LORD, the God of Israel, had given.
The king had granted Ezra all his requests, for
the hand of the LORD his God was upon him.
7 So in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes, he
went up to Jerusalem with some of the Israelites,
including priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers,
and temple servants.†
8 Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month
of the seventh year of the king.
9 He had begun the journey from Babylon on
the first day of the first month, and he arrived in
Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, for
the gracious hand of his God was upon him.
10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the
Teaching of the LORD, to practice it, and to teach
its statutes and ordinances in Israel.

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* **7:1 7:1** Or *Many years later* † **7:7 7:7** Hebrew *Nethinim*; also in verse 24

11 This is the text of the letter King Artaxerxes
had given to Ezra the priest and scribe, an
expert in the commandments and statutes of the
LORD to Israel:‡
12 Artaxerxes, king of kings.

To Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the
God of heaven:

Greetings.§

13 I hereby decree that any volunteers among
the Israelites in my kingdom, including the
priests and Levites, may go up with you to
Jerusalem.
14 You are sent by the king and his seven
counselors to evaluate Judah and Jerusalem
according to the law of your God, which is in
your hand.
15 Moreover, you are to take with you the
silver and gold that the king and his counselors
have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose
dwelling is in Jerusalem,
16 together with all the silver and gold you
may find in all the province of Babylon, as well
as the freewill offerings of the people and
priests to the house of their God in Jerusalem.
17 With this money, therefore, you are to buy
as many bulls, rams, and lambs as needed,
together with their grain offerings and drink
offerings, and offer them on the altar at the
house of your God in Jerusalem.

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‡ **7:11** **7:11** The original text of Ezra 7:12–26 is in Aramaic.

§ **7:12** **7:12** Aramaic *Perfect now* (probably a greeting)

18 You and your brothers may do whatever
seems best with the rest of the silver and gold,
according to the will of your God.
19 You must deliver to the God of Jerusalem all
the articles given to you for the service of the
house of your God.
20 And if anything else is needed for the house
of your God that you may have occasion to
supply, you may pay for it from the royal
treasury.
21 I, King Artaxerxes, decree to all the
treasurers west of the Euphrates:* Whatever
Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God
of heaven, may require of you, it must be
provided promptly,
22 up to a hundred talents of silver,† a hundred
cors of wheat,‡ a hundred baths of wine,§ a
hundred baths of olive oil,* and salt without
limit.
23 Whatever is commanded by the God of
heaven must be done diligently for his house.
For why should wrath fall on the realm of the
king and his sons?
24 And be advised that you have no authority
to impose tribute, duty, or toll on any of the

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* **7:21 7:21** Aramaic *beyond the River*; also in verse 25 † **7:22 7:22** *100 talents* is approximately 3.77 tons or 3.42 metric tons of silver. ‡ **7:22 7:22** *100 cors* is approximately 624 bushels or 22,000 liters (probably about 19.2 tons or 17.4 metric tons of wheat). § **7:22 7:22** *100 baths* is approximately 580 gallons or 2,200 liters of wine. * **7:22 7:22** Or *100 baths of oil*; that is, approximately 580 gallons or 2,200 liters

priests, Levites, singers, doorkeepers, temple
servants, or other servants of this house of God.
25 And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of
your God, which you possess, are to appoint
magistrates and judges to judge all the people
west of the Euphrates—all who know the laws of
your God. And you are to teach these laws to
anyone who does not know them.
26 If anyone does not keep the law of your God
and the law of the king, let a strict judgment be
executed against him, whether death,
banishment, confiscation of property, or
imprisonment.
27 Blessed be the LORD, the God of our fathers,
who has put into the heart of the king to so
honor the house of the LORD in Jerusalem,
28 and who has shown me favor before the
king, his counselors, and all his powerful
officials.
And because the hand of the LORD my God
was upon me, I took courage and gathered the
leaders of Israel to return with me.

8

1 These are the family heads and genealogical
records of those who returned with me from
Babylon during the reign of King Artaxerxes:

2 from the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom;
from the descendants of Ithamar, Daniel;
from the descendants of David, Hattush
3 of the descendants of Shecaniah;
from the descendants of Parosh, Zechariah,
and with him were registered 150 men;

4 from the descendants of Pahath-Moab,
Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah, and with him
200 men;
5 from the descendants of Shecaniah, the son
of Jahaziel,* and with him 300 men;
6 from the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of
Jonathan, and with him 50 men;
7 from the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiah son
of Athaliah, and with him 70 men;
8 from the descendants of Shephatiah,
Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him 80
men;
9 from the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of
Jehiel, and with him 218 men;
10 from the descendants of Shelomith, the son
of Josiphiah,† and with him 160 men;
11 from the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah
son of Bebai, and with him 28 men;
12 from the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son
of Hakkatan, and with him 110 men;
13 from the later‡ descendants of Adonikam,
these were their names: Eliphelet, Jeiel, and
Shemaiah, and with them 60 men;
14 and from the descendants of Bigvai, both
Uthai and Zaccur,§ and with them 70 men.

15 Now I assembled these exiles at the canal
that flows to Ahava, and we camped there three

* **8:5 8:5** Some LXX manuscripts (see also 1 Esdras 8:32) *from the descendants of Zattu, Shecaniah son of Jahaziel* † **8:10 8:10** Some LXX manuscripts (see also 1 Esdras 8:36) *from the descendants of Bani, Shelomith son of Josiphiah* ‡ **8:13 8:13** Or *the last* § **8:14 8:14** Qere (see also LXX and Syriac); Ketiv *Zabbud*

days. And when I searched among the people
and priests, I found no Levites there.
16 Then I summoned the leaders: Eliezer, Ariel,
Shemaiah, Elnathan,* Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan,
Zechariah, and Meshullam, as well as the
teachers Joiarib and Elnathan.
17 And I instructed them to go to Iddo,† the
leader at Casiphia, with a message for him and
his kinsmen, the temple servants‡ at Casiphia,
that they should bring to us ministers for the
house of our God.
18 And since the gracious hand of our God was
upon us, they brought us Sherebiah—a man of
insight from the descendants of Mahli son of
Levi, the son of Israel—along with his sons and
brothers, 18 men;
19 also Hashabiah, together with Jeshaiah,
from the descendants of Merari, and his
brothers and their sons, 20 men.
20 They also brought 220 of the temple
servants, all designated by name. David and the
officials had appointed them to assist the Levites.
21 And there by the Ahava Canal I proclaimed
a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before
our God and ask him for a safe journey for us
and our children, with all our possessions.
22 For I was ashamed to ask the king for an
escort of soldiers and horsemen to protect us
from our enemies on the road, since we had told

* **8:16 8:16** *Elnathan* appears three times in verse, either as a repetition for emphasis or as a record of multiple men with this name. † **8:17 8:17** Qere; Ketiv *I sent them out* ‡ **8:17 8:17** Hebrew *the Nethinim*; also in verse 20

him, “The hand of our God is gracious to all who
seek him, but his great anger is against all who
forsake him.”
23 So we fasted and petitioned our God about
this, and he granted our request.
24 Then I set apart twelve of the leading
priests, together with Sherebiah, Hashabiah,
and ten of their brothers,
25 and I weighed out to them the contribution
of silver and gold and the articles that the king,
his counselors, his leaders, and all the Israelites
there had offered for the house of our God.
26 I weighed out into their hands 650 talents of
silver,§ articles of silver weighing 100 talents,*
100 talents of gold,†
27 20 gold bowls valued at 1,000 darics,‡ and
two articles of fine polished bronze, as precious
as gold.
28 Then I told them, “You are holy to the LORD,
and these articles are holy. The silver and gold
are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of
your fathers.
29 Guard them carefully until you weigh them
out in the chambers of the house of the LORD in
Jerusalem before the leading priests, Levites,
and heads of the Israelite families.”

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§ **8:26 8:26** *650 talents* is approximately 24.5 tons or 22.2 metric tons of silver. * **8:26 8:26** *100 talents* is approximately 3.77 tons or 3.42 metric tons of silver articles. † **8:26 8:26** *100 talents* is approximately 3.77 tons or 3.42 metric tons of gold. ‡ **8:27 8:27** Or *worth 1,000 drachmas*; that is, approximately 18.5 pounds or 8.4 kilograms of gold

30 So the priests and Levites took charge of the
silver and gold and sacred articles that had been
weighed out to be taken to the house of our God
in Jerusalem.

31 On the twelfth day of the first month we set
out from the Ahava Canal to go to Jerusalem,
and the hand of our God was upon us to protect
us from the hands of the enemies and bandits
along the way.

32 So we arrived at Jerusalem and rested there
for three days.

33 On the fourth day, in the house of our God,
we weighed out the silver and gold and sacred
articles into the hand of Meremoth son of Uriah,
the priest. Eleazar son of Phinehas was with
him, along with the Levites Jozabad son of
Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui.

34 Everything was verified by number and
weight, and the total weight was recorded at
that time.

35 Then the exiles who had returned from
captivity sacrificed burnt offerings to the God of
Israel: 12 bulls for all Israel, 96 rams, 77 lambs,
and a purification offering of 12 male goats. All
this was a burnt offering to the LORD.

36 They also delivered the king's edicts to the
royal satraps§ and governors of the region west
of the Euphrates,* who proceeded to assist the
people and the house of God.

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§ **8:36 8:36** A *satrap* was a Persian official. * **8:36 8:36** Hebrew *governors beyond the River*

9

1 After these things had been accomplished,
the leaders approached me and said, “The
people of Israel, including the priests and
Levites, have not kept themselves separate from
the surrounding peoples whose abominations
are like those of the Canaanites, Hittites,
Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites,
Egyptians, and Amorites.
2 Indeed, the Israelites have taken some of
their daughters as wives for themselves and
their sons, so that the holy seed has been mixed
with the people of the land. And the leaders and
officials have taken the lead in this
unfaithfulness!”
3 When I heard this report, I tore my tunic and
cloak, pulled out some hair from my head and
beard, and sat down in horror.
4 Then everyone who trembled at the words of
the God of Israel gathered around me because of
the unfaithfulness of the exiles, while I sat there
in horror until the evening offering.
5 At the evening offering, I got up from my
humiliation with my tunic and cloak torn, and I
fell on my knees, spread out my hands to the
LORD my God,
6 and said:
“O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to
lift up my face to you, my God, because our
iniquities are higher than our heads, and our
guilt has reached the heavens.
7 From the days of our fathers to this day, our
guilt has been great. Because of our iniquities,

we and our kings and priests have been
delivered into the hands of the kings of the earth
and subjected to the sword and to captivity, to
pillage and humiliation, as we are this day.
8 But now, for a brief moment, grace has come
from the LORD our God to preserve for us a
remnant and to give us a stake* in his holy
place. Even in our bondage, our God has given
us new life and light to our eyes.
9 Though we are slaves, our God has not
forsaken us in our bondage, but he has extended
to us grace in the sight of the kings of Persia,
giving us new life to rebuild the house of our
God and repair its ruins, and giving us a wall of
protection in Judah and Jerusalem.
10 And now, our God, what can we say after
this? For we have forsaken the commandments
11 that you gave through your servants the
prophets, saying: 'The land that you are entering
to possess is a land polluted by the impurity of
its peoples and the abominations with which
they have filled it from end to end with their
uncleanness.
12 Now, therefore, do not give your daughters
in marriage to their sons or take their daughters
for your sons. Never seek their peace or
prosperity, so that you may be strong and may
eat the good things of the land, leaving it as an
inheritance to your sons forever.'
13 After all that has come upon us because of
our evil deeds and our great guilt (though you,

* **9:8 9:8** Or *nail* or *foothold*

our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserve and have given us such a remnant as this),
14 shall we again break your commandments and intermarry with the peoples who commit these abominations? Would you not become so angry with us as to wipe us out, leaving no remnant or survivor?
15 O LORD, God of Israel, you are righteous! For we remain this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it no one can stand before you."

10

1 While Ezra prayed and made this confession, weeping and falling facedown before the house of God, a very large assembly of Israelites—men, women, and children—gathered around him, and the people wept bitterly as well.

2 Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel, an Elamite, said to Ezra: "We have been unfaithful to our God by marrying foreign women from the people of the land, yet in spite of this, there is hope for Israel.
3 So now let us make a covenant before our God to send away all the foreign wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the command of our God. Let it be done according to the Teaching.
4 Get up, for this matter is your responsibility, and we will support you. Be strong and take action!"

5 So Ezra got up and made the leading priests,
Levites, and all Israel take an oath to do what
had been said. And they took the oath.
6 Then Ezra withdrew from before the house
of God and walked to the chamber of Jehohanan
son of Eliashib. And when he went there,* he
ate no food and drank no water, because he was
mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles.
7 And a proclamation was issued throughout
Judah and Jerusalem that all the exiles should
gather at Jerusalem.
8 Whoever failed to appear within three days
would forfeit all his property, according to the
counsel of the leaders and elders, and would
himself be expelled from the assembly of the
exiles.
9 So within the three days, all the men of
Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem,
and on the twentieth day of the ninth month, all
the people sat in the square at the house of God,
trembling regarding this matter and because of
the heavy rain.
10 Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to
them, “You have been unfaithful by marrying
foreign women, adding to the guilt of Israel.
11 Now, therefore, make a confession to the
LORD, the God of your fathers, and do his will.
Separate yourselves from the people of the land
and from your foreign wives.”
12 And the whole assembly responded in a
loud voice: “Truly we must do as you say!

* **10:6 10:6** Some read *And he spent the night there*; compare 1 Esdras 9:2

13 But there are many people here, and it is the
rainy season. We are not able to stay out in the
open. Nor is this the work of one or two days,
for we have transgressed greatly in this matter.
14 Let our leaders represent the whole
assembly. Then let everyone in our towns who
has married a foreign woman come at an
appointed time, together with the elders and
judges of each town, until the fierce anger of our
God in this matter is turned away from us."
15 (Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah
son of Tikvah, supported by Meshullam and
Shabbethai the Levite, opposed this plan.)
16 So the exiles did as proposed. Ezra the
priest and men who were family heads were set
apart,† each of them identified by name, to
represent their families. On the first day of the
tenth month they launched the investigation,
17 and by the first day of the first month they
had dealt with all the men who had married
foreign women.
18 Among the descendants of the priests who
had married foreign women were found these
descendants of Jeshua son of Jozadak‡ and his
brothers:

Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah.
19 They pledged to send their wives away, and
for their guilt they presented a ram from the
flock as a guilt offering.

† **10:16 10:16** 1 Esdras 9:16 and Syriac *Ezra the priest selected men who were family heads* ‡ **10:18 10:18** *Jozadak* is a variant of *Jehozadak*; see 1 Chronicles 5:40.

20 From the descendants of Immer:

Hanani and Zebadiah.
21 From the descendants of Harim:

Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and
Uzziah.
22 From the descendants of Pashhur:

Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel,
Jozabad, and Elasah.
23 Among the Levites:

Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita),
Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.
24 From the singers:

Eliashib.
From the gatekeepers:

Shallum, Telem, and Uri.
25 And among the other Israelites, from the
descendants of Parosh:

Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar,
Malchijah,§ and Benaiah.
26 From the descendants of Elam:

Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth,
and Elijah.
27 From the descendants of Zattu:

§ **10:25 10:25** LXX *Hashabiah*

Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth,
Zabad, and Aziza.
28 From the descendants of Bebai:

Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.
29 From the descendants of Bani:

Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal,
and Ramoth.*
30 From the descendants of Pahath-moab:

Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah,
Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.
31 From the descendants of Harim:

Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah,
Shimeon,
32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.
33 From the descendants of Hashum:

Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai,
Manasseh, and Shimei.
34 From the descendants of Bani:

Maadai, Amram, Uel,
35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhu,†
36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,
37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasai.‡
38 Bani, Binnui, Shimei,§
39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,
40 Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

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* **10:29 10:29** Qere; Ketiv *Jeremoth* † **10:35 10:35** Qere; Ketiv *Cheluhi* ‡ **10:37 10:37** Qere; Ketiv *Jaasu* § **10:38 10:38** LXX *From the descendants of Binnui: Shimei*

41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,
42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.
43 And from the descendants of Nebo:

Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai,* Joel,
and Benaiah.
44 All these men had married foreign women,
and some of them had children by these wives.†

* **10:43 10:43** Qere; Ketiv *Jaddu* † **10:44 10:44** By emendation (compare 1 Esdras 9:36) *and they sent them away with their children*

Masoretic English Tanakh

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