

Jerusalem has had mighty kings who ruled over the whole province beyond the river, to whom tribute, custom and toll were paid. ²¹ Therefore issue an order that this city not be rebuilt, until I make a decree. ²² More over, take care not to be slack in this; why should damage grow ²³ to the hurt of the King?

²³ Then when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum and the scribe Shimshai and their associates, they hurried to the Jews in Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease.

²⁴ At that time the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of king Darius of Persia.

EZRA 5

WHITWICK
METHODIST CHURCH

- 1 At that time the prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem. They prophesied in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. *PJ.*
- 2 Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jehozadak responded by starting again to rebuild the Temple of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them and helped them.
- 3 But Tatteni, governor of the province west of the Euphrates River, and Shethar-bozeni and their colleagues soon arrived in Jerusalem and asked, "Who gave you permission to rebuild this Temple and restore this structure?"⁴ They also asked for the names of all the men working on the Temple.⁵ But because their God was watching over them, the leaders of the Jews were not prevented from

building until a report was sent to Darius and he returned his decision.

- 6 This is a copy of the letter from Tattenai the governor, Shethar-bozrah, and the other officials of the province west of the Euphrates River sent to King Darius:
- 7 To King Darius. Greetings
8. "The King should know that we went to the construction site of the Temple of the great God in the province of Judah. It is being rebuilt with specially prepared stones, and timber is being laid in its walls. The work is going forward with great energy and success.
9. We asked the leaders, 'Who gave you permission to rebuild this Temple and restore this structure?'
10. And we demanded their names so that we could tell you who the leaders were.

EZRA 5

WHITWICK
METHODIST CHURCH

11. "This was their answer: 'We are the servants of God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the Temple that was built here many years ago by a great King of Israel.'

12. But because our ancestors angered the God of heaven, he abandoned them to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon who destroyed this Temple and exiled the people to Babylonia.

13. However, King Cyrus of Babylon, during the first year of his reign, issued a decree that the Temple of God should be rebuilt.

14 King Cyrus returned the gold and silver cups that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of Babylon. These cups were taken from that temple and presented to a man named Sheshbazzar whom King Cyrus appointed as governor of Judah.

15. The king instructed ^{him} to return the cups to their place in Jerusalem and to rebuild the Temple of God there, on its original site.

16. So this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations

you shall put them in the house of God.

Now you, Zerubbabel, governor of the province beyond the river, Shethorbozenai, and you, their associates, the envoys in province beyond the river, keep away;

let the work on this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.

Moreover, I make a decree regarding what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God: the cost is to be paid to these people, in full and without delay, from the royal revenue, the tribute of the province Beyond the River

9. Whatever is needed - young bulls, rams, or sheep for burnt-offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests in Jerusalem require - let that be given to them day by day without fail,

EZRAS

1) LEWELLS SUTTON IN
ASHFIELD
Shopping centre

10 so that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the god of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his children.

"FURTHERMORE I DECRETE THAT IF ANYONE ALTERS THIS EDICT, A BEAM SHALL PULLED OUT OF THE HOUSE OF THE PERPETRATOR, WHO THEN SHALL BE IMPALED ON IT. THE HOUSE SHALL BE MADE A DUNG HILL.

12. MAY THE GOD WHO HAS established his Name there overthrow any King or People that shall put forth a hand to alter this or to destroy this house of God is Jerusalem. I Darius make a decree let it be done with all diligence

13. Then, according to the word sent by King Darius Tattenai, the governor of the province beyond the river, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates did with all diligence what King Darius had ordered.

14. So the elders of the Jews built and prospered, through the prophesying of the prophet Haggai and Zechariah

son of Iddo. They finished their building by command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus, Darius and King Artaxerxes of Persia.

15. and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

16. The people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.

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

18. Then they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their course for the service of God at Jerusalem as it is written in the Book of Moses.

19. On the fourteenth day of the first month the returned exiles kept the passover.
20. For both the priests and the levites had purified themselves all of them were clean. So they killed the passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves.
21. It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by all who had joined them and separated themselves from the pollutions of the nations of the land to worship the Lord, the God of Israel.
22. With joy they celebrated the festival of unleavened bread for 7 days; for the Lord had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the King of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel.

EZRA 7.

IDLEWELL'S SHOPPING
CENTRE
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD.

1 After this, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia,
Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of
Hilkiah,

2 Son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub,

3. son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth,

4. son of ZERAHIAH, son of UZZI, son of BUKKI,

5. son of ABISHUA, son of PHINEHAS, son of ELIJAZAR, son
of the chief priest AARON.

6 this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was
a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that
the Lord God of Israel had given; and the
King granted him all that he asked, for the
hand of the Lord his God was upon him.

7 SOME OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, AND SOME
OF THE PRIESTS AND LEVITES, THE SINGERS AND
THE GATE KEEPERS, AND THE TEMPLE SERVANTS
ALSO WENT UP TO JERUSALEM, IN THE SEVENTH
YEAR OF KING ARTEXERXES.

8. They came to Jerusalem in the fifth month,
which was in the seventh year of the King.

9. On the first day of the first month the journey up from Babylon was begun, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the gracious hand of his God was upon him.
- 10 for EZRA had set his heart to study the law of the law, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel.
11. This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to the priest Ezra, the scribe, a scholar of the text of the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes for Israel.
12. Artaxerxes, King of Kings, to the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the god of heaven peace. And now ^{13.} I decree that any of the people of Israel or their priests or Levites in my kingdom who freely offers to go to Jerusalem may go with you.
- 14 For you are sent by King and his seven counselors to make enquiries about Judah and Jerusalem

according to the law of your God which is in your hand,¹⁵ and also to convey the silver and gold and the king and his counsellors and his counsellors have freely offered to the God of Israel whose dwelling is in Jerusalem,¹⁶ with all the silver & gold that you shall find in the whole province of Babylonia, & with the freewill-offering of the people & the priest given willingly for the house of their God in Jerusalem.¹⁷ With this money then you shall with all diligence buy bulls, rams, and lambs, and there grain offerings and there drink offerings and you shall offer them on the alter of the house of your god in jerusalem.

18 Whatever seems good to you and your colleagues to do with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do according to the will of your God.¹⁹ The vessels that have been given to you for the service of the house of your God, you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem.

EZRA?

DELVERES SHIPPING CENTRE
SUTTON IN ASHFIELD

And whatever is required for the house of your God, which you are responsible for providing, you may provide out of the King's treasury.

21. I, King Artaxerxes, decree to all the treasurers in the provinces beyond the river: whatever the priest Ezra, ~~the~~ the scribe of the law of the god of heaven, requires of you, let it be done with all diligence,^{22.}

22 up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred cors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and unlimited salt.

23. Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven, or wrath will come upon the realm of the king and his heirs.

24 We also notify you that it shall not be lawful to impose tribute, custom, or toll on any of the priests, the lepers, the singers, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, or other servants of this house of God.

25 And you Ezra, according to the God-given wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River who know the laws of your God; and you shall teach those who do not know them.

26. ALL WHO WILL NOT OBEY THE LAW OF YOUR GOD AND THE
LAW OF THE KING, LET JUDGEMENT BE STRICTLY EXECUTED
ON THEM, WHETHER FOR DEATH OR FOR BANISHMENT OR
FOR CONFISCATION OF THEIR GOODS OR FOR IMPRISONMENT.

27 Blessed be the Lord, the God of our
ancestors, who put such a thing as this
into the heart of the king to glorify
the house of the Lord in Jerusalem,

28 and who extended to me steadfast
love before the king and his counsellor
and before all the king's mighty
officers. I took courage, for the hand
of the Lord my God was upon me, and
I gathered leaders from Israel to go
up with me.

Ezra B

Heads of families who returned with Ezra

1 These are their family heads, and this is the genealogy of those who went up with me from Babylon in the reign of King Artaxerxes. 2 Of the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom. Of Ithamar, Daniel, 3 of David, Harrush, of the descendants of Shereah. Of Parosh, Zechariah, with whom were registered one hundred and fifty males.

4 Of the descendants of Pahath-moab, Elioenai son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred

5 males. Of the descendants of Zadoc, Shecaniah son of Jachaziel, and with him three hundred males. 6 Of the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males. 7 Of the descendants of Elam, Tebaniah son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males. 8 Of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him eighty males.

9 Of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and 10 eighteen males. Of the descendants of Bani, Shelomith, son of Josephiah, and with

him one hundred and sixty males.
¹³ Of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males, Of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him one hundred and ten males. ¹⁴ Of the descendants of Adonikan, those who came later, their names being Eliphaleth, Jereel, and Shemariah, and with them sixty males. ¹⁵ OF THE DESCENDANTS OF BIGVAI, UTHAI AND ZACCUR, AND WITH THEM SEVENTY MALES.

Servants for the Temple

I gathered them by the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped for three days. As I reviewed the people and the priests, I found the none of the ¹⁶ descendants of Levi. Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemariah, Elnathan, Tarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were leaders, and for ¹⁷ Tarib and Elnathan, who were wise, and sent them to Iddo, the leader at the place called Casiphia,

telling them what to say to Iddo and his colleagues the temple servants at Casiphia, namely to send us ministers for the house of our God,
18 SINCE THE GRACIOUS HAND OF OUR GOD WAS UPON US, THEY BROUGHT US A MAN OF DISCRETION, OF THE DESCENDANTS OF MAHLI SON OF LEVI SON OF ISRAEL, NAMELY SHEPHERIAH, WITH HIS SONS AND KIN EIGHTEEN;¹⁹ also Hashabiah and with him Jeshuaah of the descendants of Merari, with his kin and their sons, twenty;²⁰ besides two hundred and twenty of the temple servants, whom David and his officials had set apart to attend the Levites. These were all mentioned by name.

Fasting and Prayer for Protection

²¹ Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might deny ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all

our possessions.²² For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and cavalry to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king that the hand of our God is gracious to all who seek him, but his power and his wrath are against all who forsake him.

²³ So we fasted and petitioned our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.

Gifts for the Temple

²⁴ Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah,
²⁵ and ten of their kin with them.

And I weighed out to them the silver and gold and the vessels, the offering for the house of our God that the king, his counsellors, his lords, and all Israel there present had offered;

²⁶ I weighed out into their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and one hundred silver vessels worth... talents; and one hundred talents of gold,²⁷ twenty gold bowls worth a thousand

daries, and two vessels of fine polished bronze as precious as gold. ^{v28.} And I said to them, You are holy to the Lord, and the vessels are holy; and the silver and the gold are a freewill-offering to the Lord, the God of your ancestors.

^{v29.} Guard them and keep them until you weigh them before the chief priests and the Levites and the heads of families in Israel at Jerusalem, within the chambers of the house of the Lord.

^{v30.} So the priests and the Levites took over the silver, the gold and the vessels as they were weighed out, to bring them to Jerusalem, to the house of our God.

The Return to Jerusalem

^{v. 31} Then we left the river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go to Jerusalem; the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes along the way. ^{v32} We came to Jerusalem and remained there for three days. ³³ On the fourth

day, within the house of our God, the silver,
the gold, and the vessels were weighed into
the hands of the priest Meremoth son of
Uriah, and with him was Eleazar son of
Phinehas, and with them were the Levites,
Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son
of Binnui.³⁴ The total was counted and
weighed, and the weight of everything
was recorded.³⁵ At that time those who had
come from captivity, the returned exiles, offered
burnt-offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls
for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs,
and as a sin-offering twelve male goats; all this
was a burnt-offering to the LORD.³⁶ They also
delivered the King's commissions to the King's
satraps and to the governors of the
province Beyond the River, and they
supported the people and the house of
God.