1 ESDRAS

TO THE READER

EDITION OF THE GREEK TEXT
The NETS translation of 1 Esdras is based on the standard critical edition prepared by Robert Hanhart (Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum VIII.1: Esdræ liber I [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974]).

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK
This book is known as Esdras A in the Greek tradition and 1 Esdras in English translations. 1 Esdras and 2 Esdras (Esdras B) are one pair of double traditions found in Septuagint collections (see as well the double traditions of Daniel and Esther). They represent material from the Hebrew-Aramaic 2 Chronicles (2 Supplements), Ezra (2 Esdras 1–10), and Nehemiah (2 Esdras 11–23); in addition, in 1 Esdras there is a story of three youths who served as bodyguards for King Darius of Persia.

The general relationship of content among the various versions is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Esdras</th>
<th>Chr-Ezra-Neh (NRSV) (Suppl–2 Esd [NETS])</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1–55</td>
<td>2 Chr (2 Suppl) 35.1–36.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1–5</td>
<td>Ezra 1.1–3 // 2 Chr (2 Suppl) 36.22–23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6–14</td>
<td>Ezra 1.4–11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15–25</td>
<td>4.6–24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1–5.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7–45</td>
<td>2.1–70 // Neh 7.7–73 (2 Esd 17.7–73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.46–70</td>
<td>3.1–4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1–9.36</td>
<td>5.1–10.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.37–55</td>
<td>Neh 7.73–8.12 (2 Esd 17.73–18.12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relationship of this Greek book to the Hebrew-Aramaic biblical tradition, from a source-critical point of view, is unclear. There are two main positions: 1) that the book represents an earlier form of the biblical accounts, although the present form is thought to be only a portion of that larger work, and 2) that the book is a composition subsequent to, and depending upon, the biblical books.

In this book, Zorobabel (Zerubbabel) plays a more prominent role, being the winner of the wisdom contest in the story of the three young men (4.13), and appearing where he does not in the MT version (6.17 // Ezra 5.14; 6.26b // Ezra 6.7; 6.28b // Ezra 6.9a). Neemias (Nehemiah), however, is mentioned only in 5.8 (Ezra 2.2) and 5.40 (Ezra 2.63), the latter, significantly, being an addition compared to the Hebrew.

Another emphasis is the temple, the culmination of the restoration program (walls, altar, temple), and items and persons associated with it being made more prominent and distinct through the use of the ier- stem: the temple (ἱερὸν “temple” 1.2 et passim), its paraphernalia and practices (ἱερός “holy, sacred” 1.39 et passim; ἁπαίρω “to consecrate, devote” 9.4), priests and priestly figures like the priest with the Urim and Thummim and Ezra, (ἱερατέω “to serve as priest” 5.39; ἱερατικός “priestly” 4.54; 5.44; ἱερός “priest” 1.2 et passim; ἱερώσυνη “priesthood” 5.38; ὀρχιερός “high priest” 5.40 et passim) and various temple officials (ἱρόδουλος “temple-slave” 1.3 et passim; ἱεροστάτης “temple official” 7.2; ἱεροφαλτής “temple-musician” 1.15 et passim).

1 E.g., Dieter Böhler. Die heilige Stadt in Esdras a und Esra-Nehemia: zwei Konzeptionen der Wiederherstellung Israels (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 158; Freiburg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997).
2 E.g., Zipora Talshir, 1 Esdras: From Origin to Translation (SBLSCS 47; Atlanta: SBL, 1999).
TRANSLATION PROFILE OF THE GREEK

General character

It is unclear whether this book is strictly the translation of a non-MT Hebrew-Aramaic text or loosely a composition in Greek that made use of 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah or Greek translations of those works. It is clear that the work contains a few characteristics similar to those found in other translations. However, unlike works that are clearly translations, the Greek of this book is of a good quality. Thus, if it is a translation, it is of a much freer quality than the counterparts with parallel material (2 Supplements and 2 Esdras). There are few signs of literalism, due to the translator’s/composer’s contextualization of lexical choices and use of more normal Greek structures. Some features that suggest a Semitic source are:

Pleonasm

There are only a few examples of superfluous pronouns: 2.9 (“that Nabouchodonosor had removed . . . and stored them”, α μετήγαγεν Ναβουχωδόνοσορ . . . καὶ απῆρεαστο αὐτα; Ezra 1.7 Ναβουχωδόνοσορ ἀπέρεασεν . . . τὰ); 3.5 (“whoever his statement seems wiser”; καὶ οὗ ἄν φαντ ὅ τι οὗτος αὐτοῦ ὑπόων // –); 4.63 (“the temple where his name is named on it”; καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν, ό ωνομασθη τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ // –); 6.32 (“the Lord, whose his name is there called upon”; καὶ ὁ κύριος οὗ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπικαλήθη ἐκεί; Ezra 6.12 ὁ λαός τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπικαλήθη εἰς)

Hebraisms

There is greater than normal occurrence of the conjunction καὶ, suggesting Semitic influence of the conjunction. The phrase καὶ ἐγένετο “and it happened,” for Hebrew יְהֹוָה, is found only one time (9.3 // Ezra 10.7; 8.61a // Ezra 8.32 uses a participle), but in neither case is the comparable construction in the source. At 8.87 we find ἰδού, “behold” (Ezra 9.15b, ἵνα, “Behold, us!”), but forms of ἵνα, “Behold!” occur 3 additional times in the parallel materials in Ezra-Nehemiah (2 Chronicles 35.25 // 1.30; 35.27 // 1.31; 36.8 // 1.40), but they are represented only here in 1 Esdras.

Dependence

Although the vocabulary of 1 Esdras is distinct from other translations, one phrase stands out as dependent upon existing tradition: ἕως ἀναστή ἀρχιερεὺς εὐθείας τὴν διδάσκαλον καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν “until a high priest should arise wearing Explanation and Truth,” (5.40) for כהן גדול ועומד לפני ה' ומעיד המילים והשמעים (Ezra 2.63), “until there should be a priest to consult Urim and Thummim” (NRSV). The 1 Esdras translation is in keeping with those in the LXX: Ex 28.30 [MT 26]; Leu 8.8; Deut 33.8.

THE NETS TRANSLATION OF 1 ESDRAS

As a matter of convenience this translation began with the NRSV, which was modified as necessary to fit this project. While the NRSV seeks to smooth out problematic constructions, uncertainties, etc., NETS seeks to represent the Greek as much as possible. Thus, alterations were made to the NRSV to bring it into line with Hanhart’s edition. As well, for vocabulary and style, an attempt was made to keep consistency with the rest of NETS and particularly with 2 Esdras: as much as possible, words from the same stem, used to translate the same material from Ezra-Nehemiah, are represented by words from the same stem in English in both 1 and 2 Esdras.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Versification differs among Greek editions of 1 Esdras and among the translations, and all have differences from the MT. In this translation, I have followed the versification of the critical edition.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The translation on which this is based is the NRSV. I also consulted Jacob M. Myers, *I and II Esdras: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (AB 42; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974).

R. GLENN WOODEN

---

And Josias celebrated the passover to the Lord in Jerusalem, and he sacrificed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, after he had arranged the priests by their daily duties, robed, in the temple of the Lord. And he told the Levites, temple-slaves of Israel, that they should sanctify themselves to the Lord for the task of putting the holy ark of the Lord in the house that Salomon the king, the son of David, had built, You need no longer carry it on your shoulders. And now, serve the Lord, your God, and attend to his nation Israel, and prepare yourselves by your paternal families and tribes, according to the writing of David, king of Israel, and according to the magnificence of his son Solomon. And having stationed yourselves in the temple by the paternal groupings of you, the Levites, who stand before your kindred, sons of Israel, in order, sacrifice the passover, and prepare the sacrifices for your kindred. And keep the passover according to the ordinance of the Lord that was given to Moses.*

To the people who were found there, Josias presented a gift of thirty thousand lambs and kids and three thousand calves; these were given, according to promise, from the king's possessions to the people and the priests and Levites. Selchias and Zacharias and Esselos, the chief officers of the temple, gave the priests two thousand six hundred sheep, three hundred calves, for the passover. And lechonias and Samaia and his brother Nathanael and Hasabias and Ochielos and Ioram, officers of thousands, gave the Levites five thousand sheep, seven hundred calves, for the passover.

And when these things were done in proper order, the priests and the Levites, holding the unleavened bread, stood before the people by tribe and by groupings of fathers to offer to the Lord in accordance with what is written in the book of Moses, and so they did in the morning. And they roasted the passover with fire, as required, and they boiled the sacrifices in bronze pots and cauldrons, with a pleasing odor, and carried them to all that were from the people. Now, after this they prepared both for themselves and for their kindred the priests, sons of Aaron. For the priests were offering the fat until quite late, and the Levites prepared it for themselves and for their kindred the priests, sons of Aaron. And the temple-musicians, sons of Asaph, were in their order according to what had been arranged by David—and Asaph and Zacharias and Eddinous, the king's representatives. And the doorkeepers were at each gateway. It was not possible that anyone omit his own daily service, for their kindred, the Levites, made preparations for them.

And the things that had to do with the sacrifice of the Lord were accomplished in that day: that the passover was celebrated and that the sacrifices were offered on the altar of the Lord according to the injunction of King Josias. And the sons of Israel who were found at that time celebrated the passover and the feast of unleavened bread for seven days. And no passover like it had been celebrated in Israel since the times of Samouel the prophet, and none of the kings of Israel had celebrated such a passover as Josias celebrated, and the priests and the Levites and the Judeans and all of Israel, who were found in their dwelling place, in Jerusalem. This passover was celebrated in the eighteenth year when Josias reigned. And the deeds of Josias, done with his heart full of piety, were deemed right in the sight of his Lord. Now, also the matters of his reign in previous times have been recorded: about those who sinned and those who acted impiously toward the Lord, more than any nation and kingdom, and how they conspicuously grieved him—and the words of the Lord rose up against Israel.

And after all this activity of Josias, it happened that Pharao, king of Egypt, came to incite war at Charkamys on the Euphrates, and Josias went out to confront him. And the king of Egypt sent a dispatch to him, saying, "What issue do I and you have, O king of Judea? I have not been sent out against you by the Lord God, for my war is at the Euphrates. Now then, the Lord is with me! Also, the Lord with me is urging me on! Stand aside, and do not oppose the Lord." And Josias did not turn himself away to his chariot, but he undertook to fight with him, not heeding the words of Jeremiah the prophet from the mouth of the Lord. On the contrary, he joined battle with him in the plain of Megiddo, and the rulers came down against King Josias. And the king said to his servants, "Take me away from the fight, for I have become very weak." And his servants immediately took him from the line of battle, and he got into his secondary chariot. And after he was brought back to Jerusalem, he departed this life and was buried in his ancestral tomb.

In the whole of Judea they mourned for Josias. And Jeremiah the prophet lamented for Josias. And the principal men, together with women, lamented him to this day. And this has been handed on to the whole race of Israel always to do. These things stand inscribed in the document of the events being recorded about the kings of Judea. And every single thing done of the activity of Josias and of his splendor and of his understanding of the law of the Lord, both which were done by him before and now, have been recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Lodos.

And when the people of the nation had taken lechonias son of Josias, they appointed him king in place of Josias his father, when he was twenty-three years old. And he reigned in Lodos and Jerusalem for three months. And the king of Egypt deposed him from reigning in Jerusalem and fined the nation one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. And the king of Egypt appointed his brother, King Ioakeim, king of Judea and Jerusalem. And Ioakeim incarcerated the nation one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. But he seized his brother Zarios and brought him back from Egypt.

Now Ioakeim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign in Judea and Jerusalem; he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.
38Now Nabouchodonosor, the king of Babylon, came up against him, and he bound him with a bronze fetter and took him away to Babylon. 39Nabouchodonosor also took some sacred vessels of the Lord and carried them away; he deposited them in his shrine in Babylon. 40And the things recorded, about him and his uncleanness and impiety, stand inscribed in the document of the times of the kings.

41 And his son Joakeim became king in his place, for when he was appointed king, he was eighteen years old. 42Now he reigned in Jerusalem for three months and ten days, and he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. 43And a year later Nabouchodonosor sent and removed him to Babylon, together with the sacred vessels of the Lord. 44And he appointed Sedekias king of Judea and Jerusalem, when Sedekias was twenty-one years old.

Now he reigned eleven years. 45 And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and felt no hesitation arising from the words spoken by Jeremias the prophet from the mouth of the Lord. 46 And although he had been made to swear, by King Nabouchodonosor, by the name of the Lord, he broke his oath, rebelled and, having hardened his neck and his heart, he transgressed the precepts of the Lord, God of Israel. 47Now also the leaders of the people and of the priests committed many acts of impiety and lawlessness, more than all the unclean deeds of all the nations, and they defiled the temple of the Lord that had been sanctified in Jerusalem.

48And the God of their fathers sent word by a messenger to call them back, because though he had been made to swear, by King Nabouchodonosor, by the name of the Lord, he broke his oath, rebelled and, having hardened his neck and his heart, he transgressed the precepts of the Lord, God of Israel. 49But they tried to spare them and his covert. 50 These killed their young men by sword around about their holy temple, and they did not spare young man or young woman and old man and younger man, but all he handed over into their hands.

51And they took away all the sacred vessels of the Lord, great and small, the treasure chests of the Lord and the royal stores and carried them off to Babylon. 52And they set fire to the house of the Lord, and they wrecked the walls of Jerusalem and burned its towers with fire. 53And they finished rendering useless all its glorious features. And the survivors he led away by sword to Babylon. 54And they were servants to him and to his sons until the Persians reigned, in fulfilment of the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremias. 55 "Until the land takes pleasure in its sabbaths, it shall sabbatize all the time of its desolation until the completion of seventy years."

2 In the first year that Cyrus was reigning the Persians, with a view to fulfillment of a word of the Lord by Jeremias’ mouth, 2 the Lord stirred the spirit of Cyrus, king of the Persians, and he proclaimed in his whole kingdom and at the same time in written form,

3 "This is what Cyrus, the king of the Persians, says: The Lord of Israel, Lord the Most High, has appointed me king of the world, 4 and he indicated to me that I should build him a house in Jerusalem in Judea. 5 If anyone of you, therefore, is of his nation, let his Lord be with him, and when they have gone up to Jerusalem, which is in Judea, let him build the house of the Lord of Israel. This is the Lord who encamps in Jerusalem.

6 So, as many as dwell in each place, let those in his place help him with gold and with silver, with gifts, along with horses and livestock, together with the other things added as votive offerings for the temple of the Lord that is in Jerusalem."

7 And there arose the chiefs of the paternal families of the tribe of Ioudas and Benjamin and the priests and the Leuites and all whose spirit the Lord had stirred to go up to build the house for the Lord, which is in Jerusalem, 8 and the people in their surrounding area, and they helped them with everything, with silver and gold, horses and livestock and with the greatest number of vows from many whose mind was stirred.

9 And King Cyrus brought out the sacred vessels of the Lord that Nabouchodonosor had removed from Jerusalem and stored them in his own idol temple. 10 Now when Cyrus, the king of the Persians, had brought them out, he gave them over to Mithridates, his own treasurer, 11 and they were handed over by him to Sanabassaros, administrator of Judea. 12 Now the number of these was: gold libation bowls, one thousand; silver libation bowls, one thousand; silver censers, twenty-nine; gold saucers, thirty; silver, two thousand four hundred ten; and other vessels, one thousand. 13 Now all the vessels were recovered, gold and silver: five thousand four hundred sixty-nine. 14 Now they were carried back by Sanabassaros, along with the people of the captivity, from Babylon to Jerusalem.

15 Now in the times under Artaxerxes, the king of the Persians, Beslemos and Mithridates and Tabellios and Raoumos and Beetleemos and Samsaios the scribe and the rest of those associated with them but living in Samaria and the other places wrote out the following letter to him against those who were living in Judea and Jerusalem.

16 "To King Artaxerxes, Sir, your servants Raoumos the one for events and Samsaios the scribe and the rest of their council and the judges who are in Coele-Syria and Phoenicia. 17 And now, let it be known to the lord king that, when Judeans came up from you to us, having come to Jerusalem, they are building the rebellious and wicked city, repairing both its market places and the walls, and are laying the foundations for a shrine. 18 So if this city is built and the walls are completed, not only will they not submit to paying tribute, but they will also resist kings. And since the work on the shrine is in progress, we assume it best not to overlook such a matter but to address our lord king in order that, if it seems good to you, a search may be made in the books from your fathers.

19 And you will find in the records what has been
written about them and will learn that that city was rebellious, troubling both kings and cities, and that the Judeans were rebels and set up blockades in it from of old, for which reason this city was also laid waste. 20Therefore we are now pointing out to you, Lord King, that if this city is built and its walls rise up, you will no longer have a way down to Coele-Syria and Phoenicia.”

21 Then the king wrote back the following to Raoumos the recorder of events and to Beelteemos and Samsaios the scribe and to the rest associated with them and living in Samaria and Syria and Phoenicia,

22 “I read the letter that you have sent to me. I therefore ordered that a search be made, and it was found that that city from of old has been opposing kings and that the people in it perpetrate rebellions and wars and that strong and cruel kings used to be masters in Ierousalem and were extracting tribute from Coele-Syria and Phoenicia. 23And they are victorious, they bring everything to the king proves superior and is lord of all and their master, and whatever he says to them they heed. 24If he tells them to make war one against the other, they do it, and if he sends them out against enemies, they proceed and conquer mountains and walls and towers. 25They murder and are murdered and do not transgress the king’s bidding, and if they are victorious, they bring everything to the king—whatever spoil they take and everything else. 26And as many as do not serve in the army or go to war, they instead till the soil; in turn, whenever they sow and reap, they send some to the king. 27And he is one single man! If he tells them to lay waste, they lay waste; he tells them to build, they build; he tells them to cut down, they cut down; he tells them to plant, they plant. 28And all his people and his forces heed him. Furthermore, he himself reclines; he eats and drinks and sleeps, but they keep watch all around him, and no one may go away and tend to his own affairs, nor do they disobey him. 29O Gentlemen, how

3 And King Darius gave a great banquet for all who were under him and for all his homebred and for all the nobles of Media and of Persia and for all the satraps and generals and the district governors that were under him in the hundred twenty-seven satraps from India to Ethiopia. 3And they ate and drank, and when they were satisfied, they went away, but Darius the king went to his bedroom and went to sleep but woke up again.

4 Then the three young men, the bodyguards, who kept guard over the person of the king, said one to another, “Let us state, each of us, one thing which will prove superior, and whosoever his statement seems wiser than the other—Darius the king will give him grand gifts and great prizes of victory and that he be clothed in purple and drink from a wrought gold and sleep on gold and have a chartor with a gold studded bridle and a turban of fine linen and a torque around his neck. 7And because of his wisdom, he shall take his seat next to Darius and shall be called Kinsman of Darius.”

8 And then they wrote, each his own statement, sealed it and put it under the pillow of Darius the king. And they said, “When the king gets up, they will give him what is written, and whomever the king picks—and the three nobles of Persia—because his statement is wisest, to him the victory shall be given, as it stands written.”

9 The first wrote, “Wine proves superior.” 10The second wrote, “The king proves superior.” 11The third wrote, “Women prove superior, but above all things truth is victorious.”

12 And when the king awoke, they took what was written and gave it to him, and he read. 13And he sent and summoned all the nobles of Persia and of Media and satraps and generals and district governors and consults, and he took his seat in the council chamber, and what was written was read in their presence. 14And he said, “Call the young men, and they themselves shall explain their statements.” And they were summoned and came in. 15And they said to them, “Tell us about what you have written.”

And the first, who had spoken of the strength of wine, began and spoke thus, “O Gentlemen, how does wine prove superior? It leads astray the thoughts of all men who drink it. It makes equal the thoughts of both the king and the orphan, of both the domestic and the free, of both the poor and the rich. 16And it turns every thought to fasting and mirth and does not remember any sorrow or any obligation. 17And it makes all hearts rich and does not remember king or satrap and makes everyone talk in talents. 18And when people drink, they do not remember to be friendly with friends and kindred, and before long they draw daggers. 19And when they recover from the wine, they do not remember what they did. 20O Gentlemen, does not wine prove superior, since it forces people to behave thus?” And when he had said this, he fell silent.

4 And the second, who had spoken of the strength of the king, began to speak. “O Gentlemen, do not humans prove superior, since they rule over land and sea and all that is in them? But the king proves superior and is lord of all and their master, and whatever he says to them they heed. If he tells them to make war one against the other, they do it, and if he sends them out against enemies, they proceed and conquer mountains and walls and towers. They murder and are murdered and do not transgress the king’s bidding, and if they are victorious, they bring everything to the king—whatever spoil they take and everything else. And as many as do not serve in the army or go to war, they instead till the soil; in turn, whenever they sow and reap, they send some to the king. And he is one single man! If he tells them to lay waste, they lay waste; he tells them to build, they build; he tells them to cut down, they cut down; he tells them to plant, they plant. And all his people and his forces heed him. Furthermore, he himself reclines; he eats and drinks and sleeps, but they keep watch all around him, and no one may go away and tend to his own affairs, nor do they disobey him. How
does not the king prove superior, since he is to be obeyed in this way?” And he fell silent.

13 Now the third, who had spoken of women and truth (he was Zorobabel), began to speak, 14 “Gentlemen, is not the king great, are not men many, and does not wine prove superior? Who is it, then, that is master over them, or who is lord over them? Is it not women? 15 Women give birth to the king and to all people that are lord over sea and land. 16 And from them they were born, and it is they that brought up those who plant the vineyards from which comes the wine. 17 And it is they that make men’s robes, and it is they that bring men glory, and men cannot exist apart from women. 18 Now if men gather gold and silver or any beautiful thing, and they see one woman lovingly in appearance and beauty, 19 they then let all things go and gaze at her and with open mouths stare at her, and all choose her rather than gold or silver or any beautiful thing. 20 A man leaves his own father, who brought him up, and his own country and clings to his own wife. 21 And with his wife he releases his soul and neither remembers father or mother or country. 22 And as a result you must realize that women are lords over you.

“Do you not labor and toil and bring and give everything to women?” 23 And a man takes his sword and goes out to travel and rob and steal and to sail the sea and rivers, 24 and he faces the lion, and he proceeds through darkness, and when he steals and robs and plunders, he brings it back to her he desires. 25 And a man loves his own wife more than his father and mother. 26 And many have been driven to distraction by their own minds because of women and have become slaves because of them. 27 And many have perished and stumbled and sinned because of women. 28 And now, do you not believe me?

“Is not the king great in his authority? Do not all lands fear to touch him? 29 I have watched him and Apame the daughter of the illustrious Bartacos, the king’s concubine, sitting at the king’s right hand 30 and taking the diadem from the king’s head and put it on herself. And she would slap the king with her left hand. 31 And at this the king would gaze at her with mouth agape. And if she smiles at him, he laughs, but if she is cross with him, he flatters her so that she may be reconciled to him. 32 O Gentlemen, how are women not strong, since thus they act?”

33 And then the king and the nobles looked one at the other. And he began to speak about truth, 34 “Gentlemen, are not women strong? The earth is vast, and the sky is high, and swift is the sun in its course, for it makes the circuit of the sky and returns again to its own place in one day. 35 Is not the one who does these things great? Truth also is great and stronger than all things. 36 All the earth calls upon truth, and heaven blesses her. And all his works quake and tremble, and with him there is nothing unrighteous. 37 Wine is unrighteous; the king is unrighteous; women are unrighteous; all sons of men are unrighteous, and all their works are unrighteous—all such things. And there is no truth in them, and in their injustice they will perish. 38 But truth endures and is strong forever and lives and prevails forever and ever. 39 And with it there is no partiality or preference, but it does what is righteous instead of anything that is unrighteous or wicked. And all approve her deeds, 40 and there is nothing unrighteous in her judgment. And to her belongs the strength and the kingship and the authority and the majesty of all the ages. Blessed be the God of truth!” 41 And he stopped speaking, and all the people then shouted and then said, “Great is truth, and it proves superior!”

42 Then the king said to him, “Request what you want in addition to what is written, and we will give it to you, for you have been found to be the wisest. And you shall sit next to me and be called my Kinsman.” 43 Then he said to the king, “Remember the vow that you made on the day you received your kingship to build Jerusalam 44 and to send back all the vessels that had been taken from Jerusalam, which Cyrus set apart when he vowed to destroy Babylon and vowed to send them back there. 45 You also vowed to build the shrine, which the Idumeans burned when Judea was laid waste by the Chaldeans. 46 And now, O Lord King, this is what I ask of you and what I request of you, and this is greatness that is yours. I pray, therefore, that you fulfill the vow that you vowed with your mouth to do for the king of heaven.”

47 Then Darius the king got up and kissed him and wrote letters for him to all the stewards and district governors and generals and satraps, that they should give safe conduct to him and all who were going up with him to build Jerusalam, 48 and that all the country they would seize should be theirs without tribute and that the Idumeans should give up the villages of the Judeans that they held and 50 that twenty talents a year should be given for the building of the temple until it was built 52 and an additional ten talents a year for whole burnt offerings to be offered on the altar every day, in accordance with the commandment they have, to offer seventeen, 53 and that all who would come from Babylonia to found the city should have their freedom, both they and their children and all the priests who would come. 54 Now, he also stipulated the expense until the day when the house...
would be finished and Jerusalem built. He also stipulated that they give allotments of land and wages to all who would guard the city. He also sent back from Babylon all the vessels that Cyrus had set apart, and everything that Cyrus said that he would do he too instructed to be done and to be sent back to Jerusalem.

58 And when the young man went out, he lifted up his face to heaven toward Jerusalem and blessed the king of heaven, saying, "From you comes victory, and from you comes wisdom, and yours is the glory. And I am your domestic. Blessed are you, who have given me wisdom, and you I acknowledge, O Master of our fathers." 61 And he took the letters and departed, and he went to Babylon and told all his kindred. And they blessed the God of their fathers, because he had given them permission and release to go up and build Jerusalem and the temple where his name is named on it, and with music and rejoicing they drank hard for seven days.

5 Now, after these things the leaders of the house of the paternal families and their wives and sons and daughters and their male and female servants and their livestock were chosen to go up by their tribes. And Darius sent along with them a thousand cavalry until they would restore them to Jerusalem in peace, and with the music of drums and flutes. And all their kindred were making merry, and he made them go up along with them.

4 And these are the names of the men who went up, by their paternal families for the tribes, over their groups: the priests, sons of Phinees son of Aaron: Iesous the son of Iosedek the son of Saraichiel, of the house of David, of the lineage of Phares and of the tribe of Ioudas, who spoke wise words before Darius, the king of the Persians, in the second year of his reign, in the month of Nisan, the first month.

7 Now, the following are those from Judea who went up out of the captivity in exile, whom Nabuchodonosor, the king of Babylon, had deported to Babylon, and each returned to Jerusalem and the rest of Judea, to his own town, those who came with their leaders Zorobabel and Iesous, Neemias, Zaratias, Resaias, Enemios, Mardochais, Beelsaros, Aspharos, Borolias, Roimos and Baana. The number of those from the nation and their leaders: sons of Phoros, two thousand one hundred seventy-two; sons of Saphat, sons of Amon.

8 And the following are those from the nation and their leaders: sons of Bani, six hundred forty-eight; 13 sons of Chorbe, seven hundred five; sons of Iairos, sons of Daisan, sons of Noeba, sons of Phinoe, sons of Asara, sons of Basthai, sons of Asana, sons of Maani, sons of Naphisi, sons of Akouph, sons of Hachiba, sons of Hasour, sons of Pharakim, sons of Basaloth, sons of Meedda, sons of Koutha, sons of Charea, the sons of Barchous, sons of Serar, sons of Thomoi, sons of Nasie, sons of Hatipha.

9 The temple-musicians: sons of Asaph, one hundred thirty-nine.


35 All the temple-servants and the sons of Salomon’s servants were three hundred seventy-two.

36 And the following are those who came up from Thermelie and Thelesars with Charath lead-

a Or Ater Hezekias  b Or Phakareth Sabie
ing them: Adan and Amar— 37 and they could not prove by their paternal families or generations how they were from Israel—sons of Dalan the son of Touban, sons of Nekodan, six hundred fifty-two.

38 Also, from the priests those who had assumed the priesthood but were not found: sons of Hobbia, sons of Hakkos and the sons of Ioddous who took Auggia to wife, one of the daughters of Pharzellaia, and was called by his name. 39 And when their genealogical entry was sought in the register and was not found, they were excluded from serving as priests, 40 and Neemias and Hatharias told them that they were not to share in the holy things until a high priest should arise wearing Explanation and Truth.

41 Now, their total was: of Israel, twelve or more years of age, besides male and female servants, forty-two thousand three hundred sixty; their male and female servants were seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven; there were two hundred forty-five harpists and harp singers.

42 There were four hundred thirty-five camels and seven thousand thirty-six horses, two hundred forty-five mules and five thousand five hundred twenty-five beasts of burden.

43 And some of those who led by paternal families, when they arrived at the temple of God that is in Jerusalem, vowed that they would erect the altar of the God of Israel 44 and that they would give to the temple treasury for the work a thousand minas of gold and five thousand minas of silver and one hundred priests' vestments.

45 And the priests and the Levites and those who were from his people were settled in Jerusalem and its vicinity, and the temple-musicians and the doorkeepers and all Israel were in their villages.

46 Now, when the seventh month came and the sons of Israel were all in their own homes, they gathered with a single purpose in the open area of the first eastward facing gateway. 47 And lesous the son of Iosedek with his brothers, the priests and Zorobabel the son of Salathiel with his kindred took their places and prepared the altar of the God of Israel 48 so that they could offer whole burnt offerings upon it, following what was prescribed in the book of Moyses the man of God. 49 And some from the other nations of the land joined them. And they erected the altar in their place, because all the nations that were in the land were hostile to them and were stronger than they, and they offered sacrifices at the proper time and whole burnt offerings to the Lord in the morning and late afternoon. 50 They celebrated the feast of tent pitching, as is ordered in the law, and sacrifices every day, as was proper, 51 and thereafter the perpetual offerings and sacrifices on sabbaths and new moons and all the consecrated feasts. 52 And as many as had made a vow to God began to offer sacrifices to God from the new moon of the seventh month, and the shrine of God had not yet been built.

53 And they gave money to the masons and carpenters and food and drink and carts to the Sidonians and the Tyrians, to deliver cedar logs from Lebanon, to convey them in rafts to the harbor of Joppa, according to the written ordinance that they had from Cyrus, the Persians' king.

54 And in the second year after his arrival at the temple of God in Jerusalem, during the second month, Zorobabel the son of Salathiel and lesous the son of Iosedek and their kindred, the Levitical priests, and all who had arrived at Jerusalem from the captivity made a beginning 55 and laid the foundation of the shrine of God on the new moon of the second month in the second year of their coming to Judea and Jerusalem. 56 And they appointed the Levites who were twenty or more years of age to have charge of the work of the Lord. And lesous stood, along with his sons and kindred, both Kadmiel his brother and the sons of lesous Emadaboun 57 and the sons of Ioda son of Iliadoun with their sons and kindred, all the Levites, as taskmasters functioning with a single purpose for the work on the house of the Lord.

And the builders built the shrine of the Lord, 58 and the priests stood in their vestments with musical instruments and trumpets, and the Levites, sons of Asaph, holding cymbals, were singing hymns to the Lord for the erection of the house of the Lord. 60 And some of the Levitical priests and of those who presided over their paternal families, the old men who had seen the house before this one, came to the building of this one with outcries and loud weeping, 61 and many people with trumpets and joy with a loud sound, 62 so that the people could not hear the trumpets because of the people's weeping. For it was the crowd that was trumpeting so loudly that they were heard far away.

63 And when the enemies of the tribe of Ioudas and Benjamin heard it, they came to learn what the sound of trumpets meant. 64 And they learned that those who were from the captivity were building the shrine for the Lord, God of Israel, 65 and when they approached Zorobabel and lesous and the leaders of the paternal families they said to them, "We will build along with you. 66 For, like you, we hear your Lord, and we have been making offerings to him ever since the days of Asbasareth, the king of the Assyrians, who transferred us to here." 67 And Zorobabel and lesous and the leaders of the paternal families of Israel said to them, "You have nothing to do with us in building the house for the Lord, our God. 68 For we alone will build it for the Lord of Israel, following what Cyrus, the king of the Persians, has ordered us." 69 But the nations of the land, by falling asleep over those in Judea and laying siege to them, con-

---

[a] Gk 1 mina = 0.6 kg  [b] Or silver  [c] Perhaps son of Emadaboun  [d] Possibly obey  [e] Or burning incense  [f] Gk uncertain
straining the building. And by bringing about plots and demagoguery and uprisings, they prevented the completion of the building as long as King Cyrus lived. And they were kept from building for two years until the reign of Darius.

6 Now in the second year of the reign of Darius, the prophets Haggai and Zacharias the son of Eddo prophesied to the Judeans who were in Judea and Jerusalem, in the name of the Lord, God of Israel, who is over them. Then Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel and Jesous the son of Josdeek arose and began to build the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, the prophets of the Lord joining in and helping them.

3 At the same time, there came to them Sisinnes, the governor of Syria and Phoenicia, and Sathrabouzanes and their associates, and they said to them, "By whose order to you are you building this house and this roof and are finishing all the other things? And who are the builders that are finishing these things?" And the elders of the Judeans had favor with the captives, due to consideration from the Lord, and they were not prevented from building until Darius would be notified about them and his orders be issued.

7 A copy of a letter Sisinnes, the governor of Syria and Phoenicia—and Sathrabouzanes and their associate leaders in Syria and Phoenicia—wrote to Darius and sent,

"To King Darius, greetings! Let it be fully known to our lord the king that, when we arrived in the region of Judea and entered the city of Jerusalem, we found the elders of the Judeans of the captivity building in the city of Jerusalem a great new house for the Lord, using smoothed stones with costly timbers in the walls, and that those projects are proceeding with speed and that the work is going well in their hands and that they are being completed with all splendor and care. Then we inquired of these elders, saying, 'By whose orders are you building this house and laying the foundations of these projects?' So, in order that we might inform you and write you about who the individuals are that lead them, we questioned them and asked them for the list of the names of the proponents. But they answered us, 'We are the servants of the Lord who created heaven and earth. And the house had been built rather many years ago by a great and strong king of Israel, and it was completed. And when our fathers sinned against the heavenly Lord of Israel, provoking him, he gave them into the hands of Nabouchodonosor, king of Babylonia, king of the Chaldeans. They, having pulled it down, both burned the house and carried off the people captive to Babylon. But in the first year that Cyrus reigned over the country of Babylonia, King Cyrus wrote that they could build this house. And the sacred vessels of gold and silver, which Nabouchodonosor had taken out of the house in Jerusalem and stored in his own shrine, these Cyrus the king took out again from the shrine in Babylonia, and they were given to Zorobabel and Sanabassaros the governor, and he ordered him to return all these vessels and put them in the shrine in Jerusalem, and that this shrine of the Lord should be built on its site. Then when this Sanabassaros arrived, he put in the foundations of the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, and although it has been in the process of construction from that time until now, it has not reached completion. Now therefore, O King, if it is judged right, let there be a search in our lord king's royal archives in Babylon, and if it is found that the building of the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem, was done with the consent of Cyrus the king and if it be judged right by our lord king, let him give us directions about these things."

22 Then King Darius ordered that search be made in the royal archives that were stored in Babylon. And in Ecbatana, the bastion that is in the country of Media, one volume was found in which the following was recorded, "The first year of the reign of Cyrus: King Cyrus ordered that the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, where they make offerings with perpetual fire, be built. Its height is to be sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits, with three courses of smoothed stones and one course of new native timber, and the cost to be paid from the house of Cyrus the king, and that the sacred vessels of the house of the Lord, both of gold and of silver, which Nabouchodonosor took out of the house in Jerusalem and carried away to Babylon, should be restored to the house in Jerusalem where they used to be in order that they be placed there."

26 Now, he ordered Sisinnes, the governor of Syria and Phoenicia, and Sathrabouzanes and their associates and those who were appointed as leaders in Syria and Phoenicia to take care to keep away from the place and to permit Zorobabel the servant of the Lord and governor of Judea and the elders of the Judeans to build that house of the Lord at the site. And I have also instructed that they build it completely and that they watch carefully that they work closely with those who have returned from the captivity of Judea until the house of the Lord be finished and that from the tribute of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia a portion be scrupulously given to these people, to Zorobabel the governor, for sacrifices to the Lord, for bulls and rams and lambs, and likewise also wheat and salt and wine and oil, perpetually, on a yearly basis, without quibbling, for daily use as the priests in Jerusalem may indicate, in order that libations may be offered to the Most High God for the king and his servants, and they might pray for their life, and I order that, if any should transgress or even not act on any of the things herein said and written, a beam should be taken out of their own house, and they should be hanged upon it, and their property be forfeited to the crown.

For the same reasons, also, may the Lord,
whose his name is there called upon, destroy any
king and nation that shall stretch out its hand to
hinder or damage that house of the Lord that is in
Jerusalem.

33 "I, King Darius, have decreed that it be done
with all diligence as here prescribed."

7 Then Sisinnus, the governor of Coele-Syria and
Phoenicia, and Sathrabouzanes and their associ-
etes, in compliance with the orders given by King
Darius, 2supervised the sacred work with very great
care, assisting the elders of the Judeans and the
temple officials. 3And the sacred work prospered
while the prophets Haggaios and Zacharias were
prophesying, 4and they completed it by the sixth
year of Darius, the king of the Persians, due to the
ordinance of the Lord, God of Israel, and with the
consent of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes, kings
of the Persians. 5The holy house was completed by
the twenty-third of the month of Adar, in the sixth
year of King Darius. 6And the sons of Israel, even
the priests, the Leuites and the rest of those added
from the captivity, acted in accordance with what is
in the book of Moyses. 7At the dedication of the
temple of the Lord, they offered one hundred bulls,
two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, 8twelve
male goats for the sin of all Israel, according to the
number of the twelve tribal leaders of Israel, 9and
the priests and the Leuites stood in their vestments,
by tribe, for the projects of the Lord, God of Israel,
following the book of Moyses, and the doorkeepers
stood at each gateway.

10 And the sons of Israel, of those from the
captivity, celebrated the pascha on the fourteenth
of the first month, when the priests and the Leuites
had been sanctified together. 11And not all sons of
the captivity were sanctified, because the Leuites
were all sanctified together 12and sacrificed the
pascha for all the sons of the captivity and for their
brothers the priests and for themselves. 13And the
sons of Israel who had returned from captivity ate
it, all those who had been separated from the
abominations of the nations of the land, as they
were seeking the Lord. 14They also celebrated the
feast of unleavened bread seven days, rejoicing be-
fore the Lord, 15because he had changed the will
of the king of the Assyrians concerning them, to
strengthen their hands for the projects of the Lord,
God of Israel.

8 And later than these, when Artaxerxes king of
the Persians was reigning, Esdras came—son
of Saraias the son of Ezerias the son of Chelkias the
son of Salemos 2the son of Saddoukos the son of
Achitob the son of Amarias the son of Ezias the son
of Mareroth the son of Zaraia the son of Saouia the
son of Bokka son of Absoue the son of Phinees the
son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the first priest. 3This
Esdras went up from Babylon as a scribe, being a
man of genius in the law of Moyses, which had been
delivered by the God of Israel, 4and the king showed him honor, for he found favor before
the king 2in all his requests. 5And some of the
sons of Israel and of the priests and Leuites and
temple-musicians and doorkeepers and temple-
slaves came back with him to Jerusalem 6in the
seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, in the fifth
month (this was the king's seventh year), for they left
Babylon on the new moon of the first month and
arrived in Jerusalem on the new moon of the fifth
month, due to the successful journey that the Lord
gave them. 7For Esdras possessed much knowl-
dge, so that he omitted nothing from the law of
the Lord or the commandments to teach all Israel all
the statutes and judgments.

8 The written ordinance from Artaxerxes the
king, having come to the attention of Esdras the
priest and reader of the law of the Lord, a copy of
which follows,

9 "King Artaxerxes to Esdras the priest and
reader of the law of the Lord, greetings. 10Since I
on my part have also decided on humane treat-
ment, I have given orders that those that desire of
the nation of Judeans and of the priests and the
Leuites and, moreover, those in our own realm—if
they so choose—go together with you to Jeru-
salem. 11Let as many as are so disposed, therefore,
set out with you, just as both I and the seven
Friends, my counsellors, have decreed, 12in order
to look into the affairs of Judea and the affairs of
Jerusalem, in accordance with what is in the law
of the Lord. 13And to take along to Jerusalem the
gifts for the Lord of Israel that both I and the
Friends have vowed and to collect for the Lord in
Jerusalem all the gold and silver that may be
found in the country of Babylonia, together with
what is given by the nation for the temple of their
Lord which is in Jerusalem, 14both the gold and
the silver for bulls and rams and lambs and what
goes with them, 15so as to offer sacrifice to the
Lord on the altar of their Lord, which is in Jeru-
salem. 16And whatever you, along with your kin-
dred, wish to do with gold and silver, discharge it
in accordance with the will of your God; 17also
you shall place before your God who is in Jeru-
salem the sacred vessels of the Lord that have been
given you for the use of the temple of your God
that is in Jerusalem. And whatever else occurs to
you as required for the temple of your God, 18you
will provide out of the royal treasury.

19 Moreover, I, King Artaxerxes, have ordered
the treasurers of Syria and Phoenicia that whatever
Esdras the priest and reader of the law of the Most
High God sends for, they are to take care to give to
him, up to one hundred talents of silver, 20and
likewise also up to one hundred korsb of wheat
and one hundred measuresc of wine and salt in
abundance. 21Let all things prescribed in accor-
dance with the law of God be scrupulously ful-
filled for the Most High God so that wrath may not
come upon the realm of the king and his sons.
22You are also informed that no tribute or any
other imposition be laid on any of the priests and
the Leuites and temple-musicians and doorkeepers

aOr for all his worthy projects  bHeb 1 kor = 22 liters  cGk 1 metretes = 22 liters
and temple-slaves and officials of this temple and that no one has authority to impose such things on them.

23 "And you, Esdras, in keeping with the wisdom of God, appoint judges and justices to judge all those who know the law of your God, throughout all Syria and Phoenicia; moreover you shall teach it to those who do not know. 24 And all who transgress both the law of your God and the royal law shall be strictly punished, whether by death and physical punishment or by financial penalty or arrest."

25 Blessed be the Lord alone, who put this into the heart of the king, to glorify his house, which is in Jerusalem, 26 and who honored me before the king and those who give him counsel and all his friends and nobles. 27 As for me—I became encouraged by the support of the Lord my God, and I gathered men from Israel to go up with me.

28 And these are the leaders, by their paternal families and their groups, who went up with me from Babylon in the reign of Artaxerxes the king:

29 Of the sons of Phinees, Garsomos. Of the sons of Letamoros, Ganelos. Of the sons of Daudi, Hatamoros, the son of Secham. 30 Of the sons of Phoros, Zacharias, and with him a hundred fifty men from the register.

31 Of the sons of Phaathmoab, Eliasias son of Zaraias, and with him two hundred fifty men. 32 Of the sons of Zathoe, Sechanias son of Iosaphias, and with him two hundred fifty men. 33 Of the sons of Elam, Iesias son of Gotholias, and with him three hundred men. 34 Of the sons of Saphatias, Zaraias son of Michaelos, and with him seventy men. 35 Of the sons of Ioab, Abadias son of Iezelos, and with him two hundred fifty men. 36 Of the sons of Bani, Salmoth son of Josaphias, and with him a hundred men. 37 Of the sons of Babi, Zacharias son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight men. 38 Of the sons of Agstah, Ioanes son of Hakatan, and with him a hundred ten men. 39 Of the sons of Adonikam—they were the last ones, and these were their names: Eliphatalos, leouel and Samaial, and with them seventy men. 40 Of the sons of Bago, Outhi the son of Issakourous, and with him seventy men.

41 And I gathered them at the river called Theras, and we encamped at that spot three days, and I inspected them. 42 And when I found there none of the sons of the priests or of the Levites, 43 I sent word to Eleazaros and Idıouelos and Maasmas and Elnatan and Samaial and Ioribos, Nathan, Etnatan, Zacharias and Mosollamos, who were the leaders and men of knowledge, 44 and I told them to go to Addaios, who was the leading man at the place of the treasury and commanded them to discuss with Addaios and his kindred and the treasurers at that place to send us men to serve as priests in the house of our Lord. 46 And by the mighty hand of our Lord they brought us knowledgeable men of the sons of Mooli son of Leui son of Israel: Asebebias and his sons and kindred, who numbered eighteen; 47 also Hasebias and Announos and Osaias, a brother from the sons of Chanoumaios, and their sons, twenty men; 48 and of the temple-slaves, whom Daudi and the leaders had given for the service of the Levites, two hundred twenty temple-slaves; the list of all their names was reported.

49 And I proclaimed there a fast for the young men before our Lord 50 so that we could seek from him both a successful journey for ourselves and for our children and the livestock that were with us.

51 For I hesitated to ask the king for both foot soldiers and cavalry and for an escort for security against those who were opposed to us, 52 for we had said to the king, "The strength of our Lord will be with those who seek after him for complete restoration." 53 And again we petitioned our Lord about all these things, and we found him very merciful.

54 And I set apart twelve men from the tribal leaders of the priests, both Serebias and Hasamias, and ten men from their kindred with them, 55 and I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the sacred vessels of the house of our Lord, which the king himself had granted—and his counselors and the nobles and all Israel. 56 And when I had weighed out, I handed over to them six hundred fifty talents of silver and silver vessels worth a hundred talents and a hundred talents of gold and twenty items of wrought gold and twelve bronze vessels of fine bronze that glittered like gold. 57 And I said to them, "You too are holy to the Lord, and the vessels are holy, and the silver and the gold as a vow to the Lord, Lord of our fathers. 58 Be watchful and on guard until you deliver them to the tribal leaders of the priests and the Levites and to the leaders of the paternal families of Israel, in Jerusalem, in the priests' chambers of the house of our Lord." 59 And the priests and the Levites who took along the silver and the gold and the vessels that had been in Jerusalem carried them to the temple of the Lord.

60 And when we had left the river Theras on the twelfth of the first month, we traveled until we arrived in Jerusalem by the mighty hand of our Lord, which was upon us; the Lord rescued us from investigation—from every enemy, and we came to Jerusalem. 61 And when we had been at that location three days, the silver and the gold having been weighed were handed over in the house of our Lord to the priest Marmothi of Ourias—62 and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinees, and there were with them the Levites, Isabodos son of Iesous and Moeth son of Sabannos—all by count and weight, and the weight of everything was recorded at that very time.

63 Now, those who had arrived from captivity offered sacrifices to God, Lord of Israel: twelve bulls on behalf of all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-two lambs, twelve male goats for deliverance—all as a sacrifice to the Lord. 64 And they delivered the king's ordinances to the royal stewards and to the governors of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, and they honored the nation and the temple of the Lord.

65 And when these things had been completed, the leaders came to me, saying, 66 The nation of Israel and the rulers and the priests and the
Leuites have not put away from themselves the alien nations of the land as their uncleanness requires—the Chananites and Chettites and Pher-ezites and lebousites and Moabites and Egyptians and Idumeans. 67 For both they and their sons have lived with their daughters, and the holy seed has been mixed with the alien nations of the land, and from the beginning of the matter the leaders and the nobles have been sharing in this lawlessness. 68 And it happened that, as soon as I heard these things, I tore my garments and my sacred clothing and pulled out hair from my head and beard and sat in anxiety and grief. 69 And all that were ever moved at the word of the Lord of Israel gathered together to me, as I mourned over this lawlessness, and I sat grief-stricken until the late afternoon sacrifice. 70 And when I rose from my fast, with my garments and my sacred clothing torn, when I had bent my knees and stretched out my hands to the Lord, I said,

71 "O Lord, I am ashamed; I am embarrassed before your face. 72 For our sins have exceeded the height of our heads, and our mistakes had piled up to the sky 73 already from the times of our fathers, height of our heads, and our mistakes had piled up until this selfsame day. 74 And on account of our sins and the sins of our fathers, we with our kindred and with our kings and with our priests were given over to the kings of the earth for sword and captivity and plundering, in shame until this selfsame day. 75 And now in some measure mercy has come to us from you, O Lord, so that a root has been left to us and a name in the location of your holiness, 76 even to uncover our light in the house of our Lord, to give us food in the time of our slavery. And when we were in slavery, we were not forsaken by our Lord, 77 but he brought us into favor before the kings of the Persians, to give us nourishment and to honor our temple and to raise desolate Sion for us as a stronghold in Judea and Ierousalem.

79 "And now, O Lord, what shall we say, when we have these things? For we have transgressed your ordinances, which you gave by the hand of your servants the prophets, saying, 80 'The land that you are entering to possess is a land polluted with the pollution of the aliens of the land, and they have filled it with their uncleanness. 81 And now, do not let their daughters marry your sons, and do not give your daughters to their sons, 82 and do not seek at any time to have peaceful relations with them in order that you may prevail and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.' 83 And all that is happening to us results from our evil deeds and our great sins. For you, O Lord, you canceled our sins and gave us such a root as this. Again we have turned back to transgress your law so as to be mixed up with the uncleanness of the nations of the land. 85 Were you not angry enough with us to destroy us without leaving us root and seed and name? 86 O Lord of Israel, you are genuine, for we were left as a root on this very day. 87 Behold, we are now before you with our lawless deeds, for no one is able to stand in your presence any longer because of these things."

88 And when Esdras was praying—he was making confession—weeping, on the ground before the temple, there gathered to him a very large crowd from Ierousalem, men and women and youths. For there was great weeping among the multitude. 89 And Iechonias son of leelos, of the sons of Israel, called out and said to Esdras, "We have sinned against the Lord and have married alien women from the nations of the land. Even now there is hope for Israel. 90 Let us take an oath to the Lord on this, that we will put out all our alien wives along with their children, because it was judged right by you—and as many as submit to the authority of the law of the Lord. 91 Rise up, and get it done, for the task is yours, and we are with you to enforce it." 92 And Esdras stood up and put under oath the tribal leaders of the priests and the Leuites of all Israel to do this. And they took an oath.

9 And Esdras got up and went from the court of the temple to the priest's chamber of Ioanan the son of Eliasibos. 2 And though he spent the night there, he did not taste food or drink water, mourning over the great acts of lawlessness of the multitude. 3 And a proclamation occurred throughout the whole of Judea and Ierousalem to all who had returned from the captivity that they should assemble at Ierousalem. 4 And if any did not present themselves within two or three days, in accordance with the judgment of the ruling elders, their livestock would be devoted to temple use, and he himself would be deemed estranged from the multitude of the captivity.

5 And all those from the tribe of loudas and Beniamin assembled together at Ierousalem within three days; this was the ninth month, on the twentieth of the month. 6 And the entire multitude sat together in the large open area before the temple, shivering because of present winter. 7 And Esdras stood up and said to them, "You have broken the law and married alien women to add sins to Israel. 8 Now then, give glory, as a confession, to the Lord, God of our fathers, and do his will, and be separated from the nations of the land and from the alien women."

10 And the entire multitude shouted and said with a loud voice, "We will do as you have said. 11 But the multitude is large, and the weather is wintry, and we do not have the strength to stand in the open air and have not found it, and the task we cannot do in one day or two. For we have sinned rather much in these things. 12 But let the leaders of the multitude take a stand, and let all those from our settlements, as many as have alien wives, come, having received time, and furthermore the elders and judges of each location, until they undo from us the anger of the Lord over this matter."

\textsuperscript{a}Or holy precinct
14 Ionathas son of Azaelos and Iezias son of Thokanos undertook the matter on these terms, and Mosollamos and Lewis and Sabbataios served together as arbitrators for them. 15 Those from the captivity acted in accordance with all this.

16 And Esdras the priest chose for himself men who were leaders of their paternal families, all of them by name, and on the new moon of the tenth month they sat down together to examine the matter. 17 And the cases of the men who had taken to themselves alien wives were brought to an end by the new moon of the first month.

18 And of the priests, those who gathered together and were found to have alien wives were:

19 of the sons of Iesous son of Iozedek and his kindred, Maseas and Eleazaros and Ioribos and Ioa-
danos. And they put on their hands a to put away their wives and as expiation to offer rams for their mistake. 21 And of the sons of Emmer: Hana-

nias and Zabdaios and Manes and Samaios and lereel and Azarias. 22 And of the sons of Phaisour: Elioenais, Maesias and Nathanaelos and Okidelos and Salthas.

23 And of the Leuites: Iozabdos and Semeis and Kolios (this is, Kalitas) and Pathaios and Ooudas and Ioanas. 24 Of the temple-musicians: Eliasibos, Bakchouros. 25 Of the doorkeepers: Salloumos and Tolbanes.

26 Of Israel: of the sons of Phoros: Iermas and Iezias and Melchias and Miaminos and Eleazaros and Idanios. And they gathered together with their children.

27 Of the sons of Elam: Iezias and Melchias and Miaminos and Eleazaros together as arbitrators for them. 28 And of the priests who gathered together and were found to have alien wives were:

29 And of the sons of Bebai: Ioanes and Hananias and Zabdos and Emathis.

30 And of the sons of Addi: Naathos and Moossias, Lakkounos and Naidos and Matthanias and Sesthel and Tolbanes.

31 And of the sons of Hannan: Elionas and Asaias and Melchias and Sabbaias and Simon Chosamaios.

32 And of the sons of Hasom: Maltannaios and Mattathaias and Sabadaious and Eliphalat and Manasses and Semei.

33 And of the sons of Baani: Jeremias, Moaadios, Maeros, Iouel, Mamdai and Pedias and Anos, Karabasion and Eliasibos and Mammitanaimos, Eliasis, Bannous, Elialis, Someis, Seleminas, Natha-

35 All these had married alien women, and they divorced them together with their children.

36 And of the priests and those from Israel who were in their settlements—37 and the entire multitude gathered with one accord in the large open area before the gateway toward the east of the temple, and they told Esdras the chief priest and reader to bring the law of Moyses that had been handed over by the Lord, God of Israel. 38 And Esdras the chief priest brought the law for the entire multitude, from man to woman, and for all the priests to hear the law, on the new moon of the seventh month. 39 And he kept reading aloud in the large open area before the gateway of the temple from dawn until midday in the presence of both men and women, and the entire multitude gave its attention to the law. 40 And Esdras the priest and reader of the law stood on the wooden platform that had been prepared, and beside him stood Mattathias, Samraios, Hananias, Azarias, Ourias, Hezekias and Baalsamos on his right and on his left Phadaios, Misa, Melchias, Lothasoubos, Naborias, Zacharias. 41 And when Esdras took up the book of the law in the presence of the multitude (for he was seated in the place of honor in the presence of all) and when he opened the law, they all stood straight. And Esdras blessed the Lord, God Most High, God Sabaoth, Almighty, and the whole multitude exclaimed “Amen,” and when they lifted up their hands and fell to the ground, they did obeisance to God.

42 The Leuites Iesous and Annoos and Sarabias, Iadinos, Lakou-

bos, Sabbataios, Hautaias, Maiannas, Kalitas, Azarias and Iozabdos, Hananias, Phalias were teaching the law of the Lord and were reading the law of the Lord to the multitude, at the same time inspiring the reading.

43 And Hattharates said to Esdras, the chief priest and reader, and to the Leuites who were teaching the multitude, with regard to all, “This day is holy to the Lord”—and all were weeping when they heard the law—50 “so proceed, and eat fats, and drink sweet drinks, and send portions to those who do not have. 51 “for the day is holy to the Lord. And do not be sorrowful, for the Lord will exalt you.” 52 And the Leuites were commanding all the common people, saying, “This day is holy; do not be sorrowful.” 54 And they all departed to eat and drink and enjoy themselves and to give portions to those who had none and to be greatly joyful, because they were also inspired by the words by which they had been taught, and they had gathered together.
A New English Translation of the Septuagint, ©2007 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. All rights reserved.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of Oxford University Press.

The text of A New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS) may be quoted in any form (written, visual, electronic, or audio) up to and inclusive of 250 verses without written permission from Oxford University Press, provided that the verses quoted do not account for more than 20% of the work in which they are quoted and provided that a complete book of NETS is not quoted. When NETS is quoted in this way, one of the following credit lines must appear on the copyright page of the work:

Quotations marked NETS are taken from A New English Translation of the Septuagint, ©2007 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

Quotations are taken from A New English Translation of the Septuagint, ©2007 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise indicated, quotations are taken from A New English Translation of the Septuagint, ©2007 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

A New English Translation of the Septuagint may be quoted in nonsalable media (such as church bulletins, orders of service, liturgies, newsletters, etc.) without inclusion of a complete copyright notice, but the abbreviation NETS must appear at the end of each quotation.

All other uses of NETS (including but not limited to the following: quotation in excess of 250 verses or 20% of the work, publication of any commentary or reference work that uses NETS) require written permission from Oxford University Press.

The title A New English Translation of the Septuagint, the abbreviation NETS, and the NETS logo are trademarks of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. and may not be used without written permission from Oxford University Press.


Interior design and typesetting by Blue Heron Bookcraft, Battle Ground, WA.

Printed in the United States
135798642