

  **Cyrus II (550-530 BC)**

# EZRA 2

(v1) Taking of the census of the first wave of return

(v2) Leadership: | » \_\_\_\_\_, governor  
                          | » \_\_\_\_\_, High Priest

(v3-58) People of known lineage:

- » (v3-35) \_\_\_\_\_ of Judah & Benjamin
- » (v36-39) \_\_\_\_\_
- » (v40) \_\_\_\_\_
- » (v41) \_\_\_\_\_
- » (v42) \_\_\_\_\_
- » (v43-54) Nethinim
- » (v55-58) Sons of \_\_\_\_\_

(v59-63) People coming from cities

(v64-67) \_\_\_\_\_ of people and possessions

(v68-69) Returnees give \_\_\_\_\_

(v70) The people \_\_\_\_\_ in their cities

## Chapter 2 focus:

### Examine the timeline:

- Is chapter 2 chronological?

### Examine the people:

- Who is Zerubbabel?
- Why does his name change between chapters 1 and 2?
- Who are the singers and gatekeepers? (See Levite Family Tree in handout)
- Who are the Nethinim and Solomon's servants?
- Are these laborers counted as part of God's people?
- Who are the people of unknown lineage?
- Are they counted as part of God's people?

The man married to Barzillai's daughter presents a particular problem for Zerubbabel. (See Sons of Barzillai in handout)

- As a son of Solomon, what is Zerubbabel's obligation to the family of Barzillai? Should it extend to this man?
- If this man is the son of a priest, what rights does that grant him?
- What does Zerubbabel decide?
- The picture of the sons of Barzillai anticipate something that happens in the New Testament times. What are they likened to?

## Examine the tasks:

- Census
- Accounting of possessions: What is included in the list (v65-67)?
- Giving of free will offerings: What is offered and for what purpose (v68-69)?
- Dwelling in the cities: What was involved in setting up life again in the Land?

## Exodus Theme:

### Similarities:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

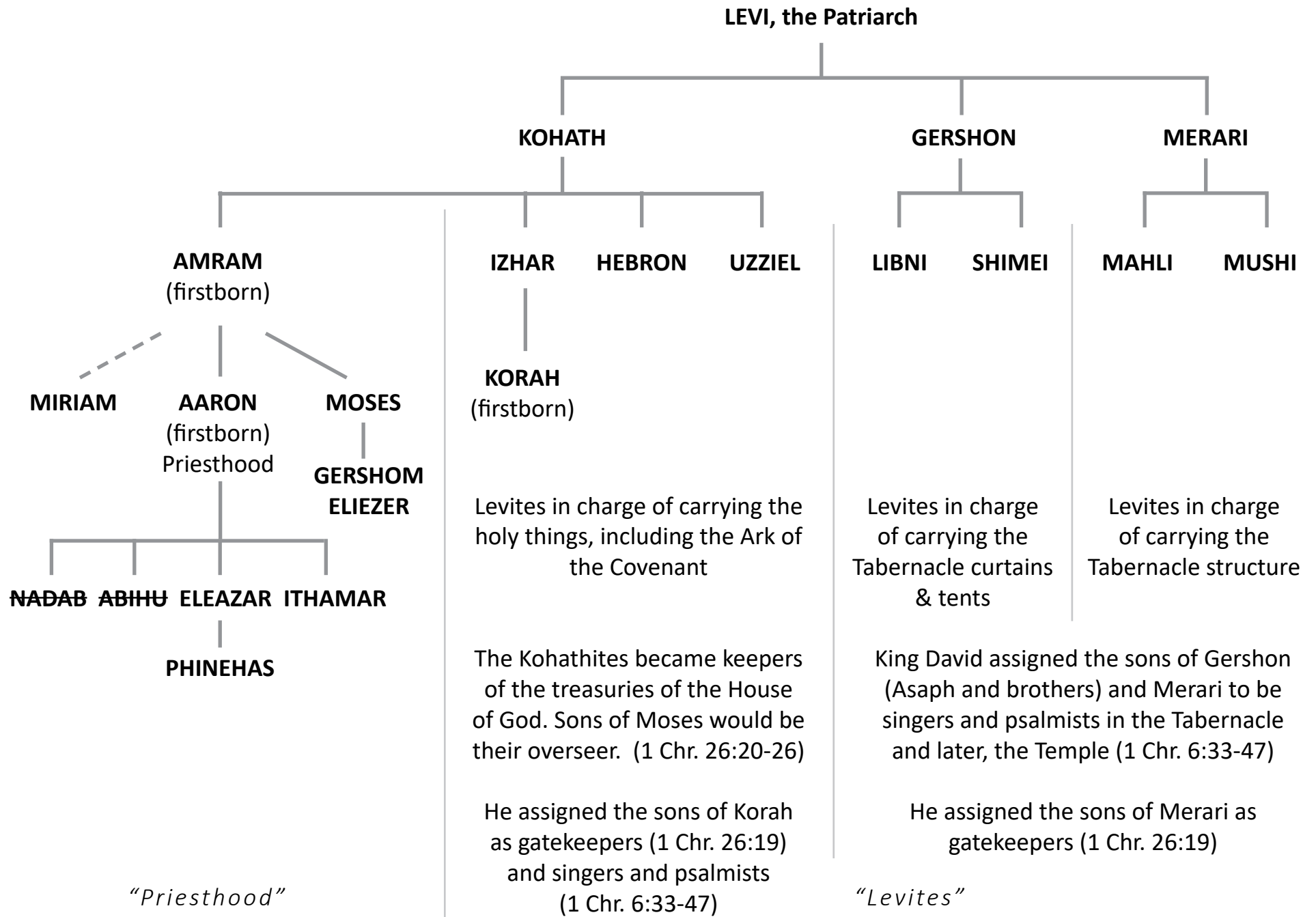
### Differences:

- \_\_\_\_\_

## Process of Separation:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# LEVITE FAMILY TREE



## People of Ezra 2

### Zerubbabel

**Ezra 5:14, 16 NKJV** “Also, the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple that was in Jerusalem and carried into the temple of Babylon--those King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to one named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. ... Then the same Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem...”

**Zechariah 4:9 NKJV** “Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ‘The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.’”

- Sheshbazzar is the Babylonian name for Zerubbabel
- He is of the kingly lineage of Israel - grandson of Jehoiachin, King of Judah, who Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon (2 Kings 24 and 25)
- He was made governor (civic leader) in charge of the first return to Jerusalem – paired with Jeshua the High Priest (spiritual leader)
- He is in Jesus’ lineage (Matthew 1:12-13)

### Singers & Gatekeepers (See Levite Family Tree)

“Now these are the men whom David appointed over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after the ark came to rest. They were ministering with music before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they served in their office according to their order. And these are the ones who ministered with their sons: Of the sons of the Kohathites were Heman the singer ... his brother Asaph, who stood at his right hand ... their brethren, the sons of Merari, on the left hand, ...” - 1 Chronicles 6:31-33, 39, 44 NKJV

“These were the divisions of the gatekeepers among the sons of Korah [Kohathites] and among the sons of Merari.” - 1 Chronicles 26:19 NKJV

### Nethinim (NKJV)\*

“And the first inhabitants who dwelt in their possessions in their cities were Israelites, priests, Levites, and the Nethinim.” - 1 Chronicles 9:2 NKJV

\*The original Hebrew is *nathiyn*. The KJV and NKJV renders this Nethinim. Other Bible translations simply call them “Temple servants.” They are servants given to the Levites for work in the Temple.

### Solomon’s servants

“All the people who were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were not of the children of Israel—that is, their descendants who were left in the land after them, whom the children of Israel had not been able to destroy completely—from these Solomon raised forced labor, as it is to this day.” - 1 Kings 9:20-21 NKJV

## People without a lineage to Israel (v59-63)

- People coming from Babylonian cities (Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub, Addan, Immer)
- Sons of priests
  - o Sons of Habaiah, Koz, and Barzillai
  - o Excluded as defiled
  - o A priest had to consult with the Urim and Thummim before letting them eat the holy things

## The Sons of Barzillai

### The Original Barzillai

Absalom rises up against his father, King David, and stages a coup to take the throne. David flees east from Jerusalem, crossing over the Jordan into the land of Gilead, to a place called Mahanaim. (The land of Gilead was taken from the Amorites and became home to the tribes of Gad and Manasseh.)

David is met by three men: Shobi the Ammonite, Machir of Lo Debar and Barzillai of Gilead. Barzillai comes from Rogelim which belongs to the tribe of Manasseh. Barzillai may be a member of the tribe of Manasseh, but we don't know. He is never identified as being of the tribes, only as being a "Gileadite" which implies an identity with the original inhabitants of the land.

These three men are rich and powerful chiefs of their territories, and they join up to give King David and his company support and refuge while they are battling Absalom. (2 Samuel 17:27-29)

After the battle, when Absalom has been put to death and David prepares to return to Jerusalem, Barzillai comes down personally to escort him back across the Jordan and into his kingdom. David wants Barzillai to join him in Jerusalem, but because he is very old, Barzillai cannot make the journey. Instead, he sends one of his house with David. Barzillai receives a blessing from David for the help that he gave when David was running from Absalom. (2 Samuel 19:31-39)

At his death, King David charges Solomon to show kindness to future generations of Barzillai's family and give them a place at the king's table. For this reason, some of the descendants of Barzillai came to live in Jerusalem and call Jerusalem their home. (1 Kings 2:7 NKJV)

### Barzillai of Ezra 2

- 20 generations removed from Barzillai of King David's day
- Claims to be a member of the house of Barzillai
  - o Unknown person who married a daughter of Barzillai
  - o He has no blood ties to Barzillai's lineage. He just changed his name.
  - o Possible association with royalty. This daughter may be of the line of Barzillai who came to live in Jerusalem and were given royal preferment (ate at the king's table).
- Claims to be a priest
  - o The sons cannot claim the priesthood unless their father was a priest.
  - o Priests were allowed to intermarry with other Hebrew tribes, just not with Canaanites. We don't know from Scripture if the original Barzillai was actually from one of the tribes.

## Sons of Barzillai as a Type

<b>Sons of Barzillai</b>	<b>New Testament Gentiles</b>
Called by the Spirit	Called by the Spirit
Not of the lineage of Israel	Not of the lineage of Israel
Claim to be one of Israel based on identification with the Davidic kings	Claim to be one of Israel based on identification with the Messianic king
Claim a place in the priesthood – to partake of the Lord’s table (most holy things)	Claim the right to partake of the Lord’s table

Question whether to allow them into the congregation of Israel (Ezra 2:62-63) Decision:	Question whether to allow them into the congregation of believers (Peter and Cornelius, Acts 10-11) Decision:
They are defiled	They are clean
They are excluded	They are included
God must decide if they may partake of the holy things – confirmed by the Urim and Thummim	God’s decision was made known to Peter in the dream about clean and unclean foods, later confirmed by the Holy Spirit.

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

1 Peter 2:9-10 NKJV

“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh – who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands – that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”

Ephesians 2:11-16 NKJV