

# Old Testament Priests & Priesthood

- Definition: A priest is one authorized to perform the sacred rites of a religion, especially a mediator between man and God.” (Webster)
- The origin of dedicated priests is uncertain.
- Melchizedek, King of Salem was a priest of God (Gen. 14:18)
- Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, was priest of Midian. (Exodus 4:1)
- There were priests among the Israelites when they came out of Egypt. (Exodus 19:22, 24)
- There were false priests who served false gods:
  - Priest of Midian (Exodus 18:1)
  - Priests of On (Genesis 41:45)
  - Priests of Dagon (1 Samuel 5:5)
  - Priests of the high places (1 Kings 12:32)
  - Priests “of them that are no gods.” (2 Chronicles 13:9)
- At Mount Sinai, God designated Aaron and his descendants to serve as priests. (Exodus 28:1, 44; 30:30; 40:13-15; Numbers 3:3)
- All priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests.
- Only those designated could perform priestly duties.
  - Not other Levites (Numbers 16:1-3; 1-10; 10:1-3)
  - Not even Moses or his descendants (1 Chronicles 23:13)
  - Not anyone other than Aaron and his descendants (Numbers 16:40)
- QUALIFICATIONS FOR PRIESTLY SERVICE:
  - Must be a male (Exodus 28:1)
  - Must be a descendant of Aaron (Exodus 28:1) with a documented lineage.
  - Must be between 30 and 50 years old. (Numbers 4:3)
  - Must be unblemished (not lame or blond). (Lev. 21:16-23)
  - Must have a proper marriage. (Leviticus 21:9, 14)
    - Not married to a harlot.
    - Not married to a divorced woman.
    - Not married to a widow other than a priest’s widow. (Ezekiel 44:22)
    - The high priest must marry a virgin of his own people.
  - Must have no uncleanness (leprosy, etc.). (Lev. 22:3-9)



- Must have an untrimmed beard with well trimmed (but unshaved) hair. (Ezekiel 4:20; Leviticus 21:5)
- Must be properly dressed. (Exo. 28:1-4; Ezekiel 44:17-19)

## ■ DUTIES OF THE PRIEST

- Teach the people. (Leviticus 10:8-11)
- Serve as judges to resolve controversy. (Deut. 21:5)
- Offer sacrifices. (Exodus 29:38-42)
- Assess impurity. (Leviticus 13-15)
- Burn incense. (Exodus 30:7-8)
- Bless the people. (Numbers 6:22-27)
- Bless God (Deuteronomy 10:8)
- Keep the tabernacle. (Numbers 3:38; 4:16)
- Take care of the altar (Leviticus 6:8-13), the lamps, and the showbread (Leviticus 24:1-9)
- Prepare the holy things for each days journey. (Num. 4:5-15)
- Continue the sacred fire. (Leviticus 6:12-13)
- Blow the trumpets. (Numbers 10:1-10)

## ■ THE HIGH PRIESTS

- Also called the chief priest. (2 Chronicles 19:11)
- God’s leader over the priests.
- Aaron served as the first High Priest. (Exodus 40:12-13)
- Aaron’s son, Eleazer, replaced him as High Priest when he died. (Numbers 20:26-28)
- The position of high priests continued through the time of Christ (Matthew 26:3 and apparently to the time of the destruction of the temple by the Romans in 70 A.D.)

## ■ DUTIES OF THE HIGH PRIEST

- Direct the work of the priests & Levites. (Numbers 3:4)
- Inquire of the Lord. (Judges 20:28)
- Consecration of the priests. (Exodus 29:1-37)
- Maintain the golden candlestand with its fire. (Lev. 24:1-4)
- Burning incense daily (Exodus 30:7-8), and in a special way on the Day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:2, 12-13)
- Offering sacrifices on the Day of Atonement. (Hebrews 5:1; Leviticus 23:6, 11, 15, 20)

## Ezra Nehemiah Lesson 2 Lecture

### Ezra 4 – 6

- As you studied in your lesson, people from the former Northern Kingdom of Israel approached the Jews and offered help in rebuilding the Temple.
- They claimed to be seeking God and to have been sacrificing to God since the king of Assyria, Esarhaddon, put them in the land. Esarhaddon was the youngest son of Sennacherib, and he ruled Assyria from 681-699 BC.
- Their claims were partially true, as you discovered from reading 2 Kings 17. They may have sought God and sacrificed to Him, but that also occurred when they were worshipping a multitude of foreign gods.
- The leaders of the exiled Jews rejected the offer of help. They were genuinely concerned about maintaining the ritual purity of the people and not defiling it with outsiders who might lead the people astray.
- Another reason for rejecting the offer of help was that the Edict of Cyrus specifically authorized the Jews to build the Temple. They may have feared trouble from the Persians if they failed to adhere strictly to the terms of the Edict.
- As these chapters mention several Persian kings, it would be helpful to pause at this point and review the Persian kings who are relevant to Ezra and Nehemiah.
  - Cyrus ruled 539 – 529 BC.
  - Cambyses II, son of Cyrus, ruled 529 – 522 BC.
  - After Cambyses' death, there was a struggle for power between a pretender for the throne and Darius, one of Cambyses' officers. Darius managed to fully wrest control of the empire from the pretender in 519 BC and ruled until 486 BC.
  - Xerxes, son of Darius, ruled 486 – 465 BC. This is the Xerxes of the book of Esther.
  - Artaxerxes I, a son of Xerxes, ruled 465 – 424 BC.

- As you worked your way through Ezra 4 - 6, you may have found yourself confused about some passages which appear to be out of sequence.
  - A good example is Ezra 4:24:
    - Thus the work on the house of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.
  - This passage appears after the verses which deal with later opposition to rebuilding Jerusalem during the reigns of Xerxes and Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:7-23) and is followed by the letter to King Darius in Ezra 5 and his response in Ezra 6.
  - Scholars have determined that Ezra 4:24 is misplaced and is better placed after Ezra 4:5:
    - They bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia. Ezra 4:5
  - We also have the confusing verses of Ezra 6:14-15:
    - They finished building the temple according to the command of the God of Israel and the decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia.  
<sup>15</sup> The temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.
  - The 6<sup>th</sup> year of King Darius' reign would be 516/515 BC.
  - The inclusion of Artaxerxes in the list with Cyrus and Darius is more representative of the fact that it was under Artaxerxes that construction of Jerusalem proper, including the city wall, was impacted.
    - Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of King Artaxerxes, which would be 445 BC.
    - Nehemiah 6:15 tells us that the wall was completed in 52 days, in the same year of Nehemiah's arrival in Jerusalem.
  - These passages, along with others, give credence to the hand of editors on the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

- Also in the chapters we studied this week, you were introduced to more source materials which formed the basis of Ezra and Nehemiah. In addition to the Ezra Memoir and the Nehemiah Memoir, we have letters to and from several Persian Kings.
- We should pause again to discuss 2 other concepts which are pertinent to this week's study: satraps and Persian taxation.
  - Under Cyrus the Great, the Persian empire was divided into large provinces, each ruled by a satrap (governor) who reported to the Persian king. The satrap also had sub-governors reporting to him who each ruled a smaller territory within each province.
  - From Daniel 6:1-3, we learn that Daniel was one of 3 administrators appointed to rule over the satraps.
  - Darius modified the organization to include a secretary for each province. The secretary was independent of the satrap and also reported directly to the king.
  - Persian taxation was multi-tiered.
    - Each sub-governor had to collect taxes for the king, for the satrap, for the satrap's civil servants, for his own subsistence, and for his civil servants.
    - The taxes collected included:
      - Tribute (payments made to the king as a bribe to keep him from invading the territory)
      - Duties on goods
      - Head or poll taxes
  - You can see from this description of the taxes why the Persian king, his governor, and the sub-governors would be alarmed if Judah stopped paying its taxes. Hence, the threat made in Ezra 4:13.
- Judah's neighbors objected strenuously to the rebuilding of the Temple, to the city of Jerusalem, and to the city walls. Why?
  - A strong Judah threatened their own power in the region.
  - A Judah which did not pay taxes threatened their personal pocketbooks.

- God had moved the heart of Cyrus the Great, so the Jews had the attention of Cyrus and later, Darius.
- The other nations resented the insular nature of the Jewish religion and society.
- The neighbors appealed to 3 different Persian kings with several different veiled attempts to stop the construction.
  - The Jews will stop paying their taxes and the Persian treasury will be depleted.
  - The Jews will rebel against Persia.
  - A prosperous Jewish state will lead to a larger rebellion in the Trans-Euphrates satraps.
  - Only their letter to Artaxerxes was temporarily successful. This halted work on the city wall and city buildings until Nehemiah (who served Artaxerxes) arrived.
- After the Temple was completed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the winter month of Adar, there was a dedication celebration.
  - The Aramaic word for this dedication is *hanukkah*. That is the same name for the Jewish holiday which celebrates the rededication of the Temple after its defilement by King Antiochus Epiphanes IV in 168 BC.
  - The dedication ceremony in 516/515 BC was similar in nature to the dedication ceremony for Solomon's Temple in 959 BC, as recorded in 1 Kings 8:62-66 and 2 Chronicles 7:1-8. However, the dedication of Zerubbabel's Temple was on a much smaller scale as post-exilic Judah was a much poorer country than Solomon's kingdom.
- The month following the dedication, the exiles celebrated Passover. It was a joyous time, marking the formal end to their captivity.
- Because Solomon's Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, Zerubbabel's Temple was enlarged by King Herod the Great, and this Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD, we only have artistic renderings of the Temples based upon their descriptions. Here are some renderings. Looking at the rendering of Zerubbabel's Temple, you can see why some of the exiles who remembered Solomon's Temple wept when they saw it.
- Finally, we should note that the time span of Ezra chapters 1-6 stretches from the reign of Cyrus the Great until some time in the reign of Artaxerxes covers a period of over 80 years.

## Ezra Nehemiah Lesson 2

### Ezra 4 – 6

**The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it. Zechariah 4:9**

1. Read Ezra 4:1-7.

- a. What was the reaction of the enemies of Judah and Benjamin when they heard a new Temple was being built?

When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel, <sup>2</sup> they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.” Ezra 4:1-2

- b. What was the response of the exiled Jews from Babylon?

But Zerubbabel, Joshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, “You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us.” Ezra 4:3

- c. Read 2 Kings 17: 24-41. Based on this passage, why do you think the exiled Jews from Babylon reacted the way they did?

Nevertheless, **each national group made its own gods** in the several towns where they settled, and set them up in the shrines the people of Samaria had made at the high places. <sup>30</sup> The people from Babylon made Sukkoth Benoth, those from Kuthah made Nergal, and those from Hamath made Ashima; <sup>31</sup> the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire as sacrifices to Adrammelek and Anammelek, the gods of Sepharvaim. <sup>32</sup> **They worshiped the LORD, but they also appointed all sorts of their own people to officiate for them as priests in the shrines at the high places. <sup>33</sup> They worshiped the LORD, but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought. <sup>34</sup> To this day they persist in their former practices. They neither worship the LORD nor adhere to the decrees and regulations, the laws and commands that the LORD gave the descendants of Jacob, whom he named Israel. 2 Kings 17:29-34**

- d. What did the enemies of Judah do next?  
Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. <sup>5</sup> They bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia. Ezra 4:4-5
- e. Name the kings of Persia involved in this action.  
Cyrus and Darius

2. Read Ezra 4:8-24.

- a. What were the next actions of the enemies of Judah and Benjamin?  
At the beginning of the reign of Xerxes, they lodged an accusation against the people of Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>7</sup> And in the days of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and the rest of his associates wrote a letter to Artaxerxes. Ezra 4:6-7
- b. What were their complaints?
- The king should know that the people who came up to us from you have gone to Jerusalem and are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city. They are restoring the walls and repairing the foundations. Ezra 4:12
  - Furthermore, the king should know that if this city is built and its walls are restored, no more taxes, tribute or duty will be paid, and eventually the royal revenues will suffer. Ezra 4:13
- c. What was the response?  
The letter you sent us has been read and translated in my presence. <sup>19</sup> I issued an order and a search was made, and it was found that **this city has a long history of revolt against kings and has been a place of rebellion and sedition.** <sup>20</sup> Jerusalem has had powerful kings ruling over the whole of Trans-Euphrates, and taxes, tribute and duty were paid to them. <sup>21</sup> **Now issue an order to these men to stop work, so that this city will not be rebuilt until I so order.** <sup>22</sup> **Be careful not to neglect this matter.** Why let this threat grow, to the detriment of the royal interests? Ezra 4:18-22
- d. What do you think was the real motivation of the enemies of Judah and Benjamin?  
They did not want Jerusalem rebuilt.

- e. How did the enemies of Judah and Benjamin enforce the ruling in the king's reply?
    - As soon as the copy of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read to Rehum and Shimshai the secretary and their associates, they went immediately to the Jews in Jerusalem and compelled them by force to stop. Ezra 4:23
  - f. Why couldn't the exiled Jews from Babylon resist?
    - This was an order from the king of Persia and the Jews were still part of the Persian empire.
    - The Jews had no army to resist an invasion from the Persian army or armies of Israel's neighbors.
3. Read Ezra 5:1-2, Haggai 1:1-15, and Zechariah 4:6-10.
- a. What did Haggai prophesy?  
The people had been focusing on building fine homes for themselves while God's Temple remained a ruin. God called for a drought upon the land. The people had not been giving thought to God's ways, only their own pleasures.
  - b. What did Zechariah prophesy?  
The Temple would be rebuilt by God's Spirit, not by human might or power. Zerubbabel laid the foundation of the Temple, and his hands will also complete it.
  - c. As a result of these 2 prophets, what work began again?
    - According to Haggai, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, Joshua, the high priest, and all the remnant of the Jewish people in Judah to work on the Temple.
    - Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jozadak set to work to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them, supporting them. Ezra 5:2
4. Read Ezra 5:3-17.
- a. Who approached the exiled Jews and what did he ask?  
At that time Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates went to them and asked, "Who authorized you to rebuild this temple and to finish it?"<sup>4</sup> They also asked, "What are the names of those who are constructing this building?" Ezra 5:3-4
  - b. Who was protecting the Jews?  
But the eye of their God was watching over the elders of the Jews Ezra 5:5



- c. Who received the next letter and what were the key points?
- King Darius of Persia
  - The Jews were making rapid progress on rebuilding the Temple.
  - They asked who authorized this work.
  - They asked for the names of the leaders.
  - The Jews said they were authorized by Cyrus to build the Temple and he even gave them gold and silver articles from the Temple (taken by Nebuchadnezzar).
  - The authors of the letter asked Darius to search the Persian archives to see if Cyrus actually issued such a decree.

5. Read Ezra 6:1-12.

- a. What new details did you learn about the Temple to be constructed in Jerusalem?  
 Let the temple be rebuilt as a place to present sacrifices, and let its foundations be laid. It is to be sixty cubits high and sixty cubits wide, <sup>4</sup> with three courses of large stones and one of timbers. The costs are to be paid by the royal treasury. <sup>5</sup> Also, the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, are to be returned to their places in the temple in Jerusalem; they are to be deposited in the house of God. Ezra 6:3-5
- b. From 1 Kings 6:2, what were the dimensions of Solomon's Temple?  
 The temple that King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long, twenty wide and thirty high. 1 Kings 6:2
- c. Who was going to pay for the new Temple?  
 The Persian royal treasury
- d. Based on your answer to 5c, what do you think the money noted in Ezra 2:69 would be used for?
- Replacing the rest of the items used in the Temple, such as the great basin, the table for the Bread of the Presence, Incense holders, and the Lampstand.
  - A curtain to separate the holy of holies from the Temple's inner court.
- e. What were the instructions to Tattenai?
- Now then, Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and you other officials of that province, stay away from there. <sup>7</sup> Do not interfere with the work on this temple of God. Let the governor of the Jews and the Jewish elders rebuild this house of God on its site. Ezra 6:6-7

- Their expenses are to be fully paid out of the royal treasury, from the revenues of Trans-Euphrates, so that the work will not stop. <sup>9</sup> Whatever is needed— young bulls, rams, male lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and olive oil, as requested by the priests in Jerusalem—must be given them daily without fail, <sup>10</sup> so that they may offer sacrifices pleasing to the God of heaven and pray for the well-being of the king and his sons. Ezra 6:8-10

f. Was there a hidden motive in Ezra 6:10?

Darius wanted the Jews to offer prayers and sacrifices for the well-being of him and his family. He must have trusted the efficacy of the Jews' prayers.

g. What were the results of defying the king's edict?

Furthermore, I decree that if anyone defies this edict, a beam is to be pulled from their house and they are to be impaled on it. And for this crime their house is to be made a pile of rubble. Ezra 6:11

h. What does the king entreat / demand God do if the decree is changed, or the Temple is destroyed?

May God, who has caused his Name to dwell there, overthrow any king or people who lifts a hand to change this decree or to destroy this temple in Jerusalem. Ezra 6:12

i. Who signed this decree?

Darius

j. What do we know about a decree signed by the Persian kings? (See Daniel 6:8.)

Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so **that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians**, which cannot be repealed. Daniel 6:8

6. Read Ezra 6:13-18.

a. What was the response of Tattenai and his associates?

Then, because of the decree King Darius had sent, Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates carried it out with diligence. Ezra 6:13

b. When was the Temple completed?

The temple was completed on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. Ezra 6:15

- c. How did the people of Judah celebrate?  
Then the people of Israel—the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles—celebrated the dedication of the house of God with joy. Ezra 6:16
- d. What ceremonial actions were taken?  
For the dedication of this house of God they offered a hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred male lambs and, as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, one for each of the tribes of Israel. <sup>18</sup> And they installed the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their groups for the service of God at Jerusalem, according to what is written in the Book of Moses. Ezra 6:17-18

7. Read Ezra 6:19-22.

- a. What did the Jews of Judah celebrate next and when?  
On the fourteenth day of the first month, the exiles celebrated the Passover. Ezra 6:19
- b. Who were the people of Ezra 6:21b?
- So the Israelites who had returned from the exile ate it, together with all who had separated themselves from the unclean practices of their Gentile neighbors in order to seek the LORD, the God of Israel. Ezra 6:21
  - They were proselytes.
- c. The passage of Ezra 6:22 mentions the king of Assyria. Who do you think is really meant here?  
The King of Persia.

# **Ezra 4 - 6**

# Judah's Neighbors Offered Help

- People From the Former Northern Kingdom of Israel Offered Help in Rebuilding the Temple
- They Claimed to Be Seeking God and to Have Been Sacrificing to God Since King Esarhaddon of Assyria Placed Them There (Circa 681-699 BC)
- Their Claims Were Partially True (2 Kings 17), But They Also Were Worshipping a Multitude of Foreign Gods
- The Jewish Leaders Rejected Their Help
  - Concerned About Maintaining the Jews' Ritual Purity
  - Feared Trouble For Failing to Adhere to Cyrus' Edict Exactly

# The Relevant Persian Kings

- Cyrus the Great; 539-529 BC
- Cambyses, Son of Cyrus; 529-522 BC
- Darius, One of Cambyses' Officers (After a Power Struggle With a Pretender to the Throne); 519-486 BC
- Xerxes, Son of Darius; 486-465 BC; This is the Xerxes of the Book of Esther
- Artaxerxes, a Son of Xerxes; 465-424 BC



Cyrus the Great; copyright: World History Encyclopedia; photo credit to Siamax





Xerxes; copyright: National Museum of Iran



Artaxerxes I; copyright: Wikipedia; Artaxerxes I's Tomb in Naqsh-e Rostam, Iran



# Passages Out of Sequence?

- Ezra 4:24
- Appears After Verses Which Deal With the Later Opposition to Rebuilding Jerusalem and Is Followed By the Letter to King Darius in Ezra 5 and His Response in Ezra 6
- Scholars Have Determined That This Verse Is Better Placed After Ezra 4:5

# Passages Out of Sequence?

- Ezra 6:14-15
- The 6<sup>th</sup> Year of King Darius' Reign Would Be 516/515 BC
- The Inclusion of Artaxerxes in the List With Cyrus and Darius is More Representative of the Fact That Under Artaxerxes, the Construction of Jerusalem and Its City Wall Were Impacted
- Nehemiah Arrived in Jerusalem in the 20<sup>th</sup> Year of Artaxerxes; 445 BC
- Nehemiah 6:15: The Wall Was Completed in 52 Days, the Same Year as Nehemiah's Arrival
- These Passages Give Credence to the Hands of Editors on Ezra and Nehemiah

# Source Materials

- Ezra Memoir
- Nehemiah Memoir
- Letters To and From Several Persian Kings

# Satraps and Persian Taxation

- Under Cyrus the Great, the Persian Empire Divided Into Large Provinces, Each Ruled by a Satrap (Governor) Who Reported to the Persian King
- Each Satrap Had Sub-Governors Who Each Ruled a Smaller Territory Within Each Province
- From Daniel 6:1-3, We Learn that Daniel Was One of 3 Administrators Appointed to Rule Over the Satraps
- Darius Modified the Organization to Include a Secretary for Each Province; the Secretary Was Independent of the Governor and Reported Directly to the King

Map of Satrapies of Persia, 490 BC;  
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| 1. Persis ( <i>Pársra</i> )<br>1.1. Persis ( <i>Pársra</i> )<br>1.1.1. Persis ( <i>Pársra</i> )<br>1.1.2. Karmánia ( <i>Karmána</i> )<br>1.2. Sousiané ( <i>Uja</i> )<br>1.2.1. Sousiané ( <i>Uja</i> )<br>1.2.2. Elymais | 2. Média ( <i>Máda</i> )<br>2.1. Média ( <i>Máda</i> )<br>2.1.1. Média ( <i>Máda</i> )<br>2.1.2. Lesser Média<br>2.1.3. Paraitakéné<br>2.2. Armenia ( <i>Armina</i> )<br>2.2.1. East Armenia<br>2.2.2. West Armenia<br>2.2.3. Kolkhis<br>2.3. Parthia ( <i>Partava</i> )<br>2.3.1. Parthia ( <i>Partava</i> )<br>2.3.2. Kappadokia ( <i>Karpatauka</i> )<br>2.4. Khorassmia ( <i>Uvársantii</i> ) | 3. Lydia ( <i>Sparta</i> )<br>3.1. Lydia ( <i>Sparta</i> )<br>3.1.1. Lydia ( <i>Sparta</i> )<br>3.1.2. Hellespontine Phrygia<br>3.1.3. Karia ( <i>Karká</i> )<br>3.1.4. Greater Phrygia<br>3.1.5. Thraké ( <i>Skudra</i> )<br>3.1.a. Ionia ( <i>Yauóna</i> )<br>3.1.b. Lykia<br>3.1.c. Mysos<br>3.1.d. Makedonia<br>3.2. Kappadokia ( <i>Karpatauka</i> )<br>3.2.1. Pontic Kappadokia<br>3.2.2. Tauric Kappadokia<br>3.2.3. Paphlagonia | 4. Babylónia ( <i>Bábiru</i> )<br>4.1. Babylónia ( <i>Bábiru</i> )<br>4.1.1. Lydia ( <i>Sparta</i> )<br>4.1.2. Sittakéné<br>4.1.3. Arbélitis =? Sagartia ( <i>Asagarta</i> )<br>4.2. Assyria ( <i>Atura</i> )<br>4.2.1. Assyria ( <i>Atura</i> )<br>4.2.2. Syria ( <i>Ebir-náru</i> )<br>4.2.3. Kilikia ( <i>Hilakta</i> )<br>4.2.a. Kypros ( <i>Yádnúna</i> ) | 5. Aigýptos ( <i>Mudriya</i> )<br>5.1. Aigýptos ( <i>Mudriya</i> )<br>5.1.1. Aigýptos ( <i>Mudriya</i> )<br>5.1.2. Upper Aigýptos<br>5.2. Libyé ( <i>Patáyi</i> )<br>5.3. Aithiopia ( <i>Kútiya</i> )<br>5.4. Arabia ( <i>Arakhiya</i> ) | 6. Arakhósia ( <i>Harauantii</i> )<br>6.1. Arakhósia ( <i>Harauantii</i> )<br>6.2. Drangiana ( <i>Zranka</i> )<br>6.3. Gedrósia ( <i>Maka</i> )<br>6.3.1. Gedrósia ( <i>Maka</i> )<br>6.3.2. Oreitai<br>6.3.3. Ariaspai<br>6.4. Sattagydia ( <i>Tatagu</i> )<br>6.4.1. (Kingdom of Abisares)<br>6.4.2. (Kingdom of Poros)<br>6.5. India ( <i>Hinduu</i> )<br>6.5.1. (Kingdom of Sambos)<br>6.5.2. (Kingdom of Mousikanos)<br>6.5.3. (Kingdom of Portikanos) | 7. Baktriané ( <i>Bástrii</i> )<br>7.1. Baktriané ( <i>Bástrii</i> )<br>7.1.1. Baktriané ( <i>Bástrii</i> )<br>7.1.2. Margiana ( <i>Margui</i> )<br>7.2. Sogdia ( <i>Suguda</i> )<br>7.2.1. Sogdia ( <i>Suguda</i> )<br>7.2.2. Dyrbaioi<br>7.3. Gandara ( <i>Gandára</i> )<br>7.3.1. Gandara ( <i>Gandára</i> )<br>7.3.2. Paropamisos ( <i>Paraupárisaina</i> )<br>7.4. Areia ( <i>Harauata</i> )<br>7.5. Daoi ( <i>Daba</i> , <i>Saká paradraya</i> )<br>7.6. Massagetai ( <i>Saká tigrasatada</i> )<br>7.7. Amyrgioi ( <i>Saká haunavargá</i> ) |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|

NOTE: some sub-satrapial districts or communities are listed with letters, e.g.: 3.1.b. Lykia) or 3.1.c. Mysos).

# Satrap and Persian Taxation

- Persian Taxation Was Multi-Tiered:
  - Each Sub-governor Had to Collect Taxes For the King, For the Satrap, For the Satrap's Civil Servants, For His Own Subsistence, and For His Civil Servants
  - Taxes Collected:
    - Tribute
    - Duties on Goods
    - Head or Poll Taxes
- You Can See Why the Persian King, His Governor, and the Sub-governors Would Be Alarmed if Judah Stopped Paying Its Taxes (the Threat of Ezra 4:13)



# Judah's Neighbors Object

- Why Did They Object To the Rebuilding of the Temple, the City of Jerusalem, and the City Walls?
  - A Strong Judah Threatened Their Own Power
  - A Judah Which Did Not Pay Taxes Threatened Their Pocketbooks
  - God Had Moved the Heart of Cyrus the Great, So the Jews Had the Attention of Cyrus, and Later Darius
  - The Other Nations Resented the Insular Nature of the Jewish Religion and Society

# Veiled Attempts to Stop the Building

- Appeals to 3 Different Persian Kings:
  - The Jews Will Stop Paying Their Taxes and the Persian Treasury Will Be Depleted
  - The Jews Will Rebel Against Persia
  - A Prosperous Jewish State Will Lead to a Larger Rebellion in the Trans-Euphrates Satraps
  - Only Their Letter to Artaxerxes Was Temporarily Successful; Halted Work on the City Wall and City Buildings Until Nehemiah Arrived

# After the Temple Was Completed

- On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Day of the Winter Month of Adar
- A Dedication Celebration
- The Aramaic Word is **Hanukkah**; the Same Name for the Jewish Holiday Celebrating the Rededication of the Temple After Its Defilement by King Antiochus Epiphanes IV in 168 BC
- The Dedication Ceremony of 516/515 BC Was Similar to the Dedication for Solomon's Temple in 959 BC (1 Kings 8:62-66; 2 Chronicles 7:1-8)
- The Dedication of Zerubbabel's Temple Was on a Much Smaller Scale as Post-Exilic Judah Was a Much Poorer Country Than Solomon's Kingdom
- The Month Following the Dedication, the Jews Celebrated Passover

# The Temples

- Solomon's Temple Destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar
- Zerubbabel's Temple Enlarged by Herod the Great
- This Temple Was Destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD
- Only Artistic Renderings of These Temples Based on Descriptions
- Looking at Zerubbabel's Temple, You Can See Why Some of the Exiles Who Remembered Solomon's Temple Wept



Zerubbabel's Temple; copyright: [www.bibleq.net](http://www.bibleq.net)





# Ezra 1 – 6 Duration

- The Text Starts During the Reign of Cyrus the Great
- From Ezra 4:6-23, We See that the Text Ends During Some Point of Artaxerxes' Reign
- This Is Over 80 Years