

## EZRA SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES

Designations 1, 2, 3, etc. correspond to chapters.



"They set the priests in their apparel with trumpets . . . to praise the Lord."—*Ezra* iii. 10.

## EZRA 2.1

### The Story of the Redeemed

The account of Ezra 2 begins with an account of the names of the leaders under whom the people returned from captivity: Together the names form an acrostic that teaches us principles by which Yahweh, in His mercy, has offered salvation to man.

<sup>1</sup>Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; <sup>2</sup>Which came with **Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, (Nahamani) Mordecai, Bilshan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah.**

1. Zerubbabel:	Shoot of Babylon	Isa. 11:1-2; Zech. 6:12; John 15:1-5
2. Jeshua:	Yah will save	Zech. 9:9; Acts 4:12; Romans 1:16
3. Nehemiah:	Consolation of Yah	Luke 2:25-26; 2 Cor.1:5-7; 2 Thes. 2:16
4. Seraiah:	Yah has prevailed	Psa. 98:1; Isa. 25:8; Matt. 12:20; Rev. 5:5
5. Reelaiah:	Caused to tremble, fearful of Yah	Isa. 35:4; Matt. 8:26-27
6. (Nahamani of Neh. 7:7)	(to pity, console)	
7. Mordecai	Bitter Bruising	Luke4:18-19; Acts14:22; Rom.5:3-4 Rev.7:14
8. Bilshan	Searcher	Jer. 17:10; Jer. 29:13-14; John 4:23-24
9. Mizpar	To number	Isa. 40:26; Hosea 1:10-11; Acts 6:7; Rev. 7:4,9
10. Bigvai	of the people	
11. Rehum	Merciful	Psa. 18:25; 103:8; Jer. 3:12; Matt. 5:7; Heb. 2:17-18
12. Baanah	Affliction	Psa. 22:24; Isa. 30:20; 48:10; Jer. 16:19; 2 Cor. 4:17-18; James 5:10-11

ACROSTIC: Yahweh's **branch** has brought **salvation** and **consolation** to His people having gained the **victory** (prevailed) in behalf of the **fearful**. The people who came through much **bitterness** and tribulation have been **searched** out by Yahweh and **numbered** of **the people**. To them He will show **mercy** who have been humbled by **affliction**.

This acrostic essentially tells the story of the return from Captivity as well as Yahweh's ultimate purpose with Israel (natural and Spiritual). There were twelve leaders under whom the people returned from Babylon with the meaning of the names of each leader filling in part of the picture of Yahweh's plan. Twelve is the number of governmental perfection specifically related to Israel. This symbolizes the organization of the Kingdom of God wherein the twelve apostles will rule over the twelve tribes (Matt. 19:28) when they are gathered from the four corners of the earth. But in the historical account, not all returned to the land. Those who lived in comfort and luxury, having made great gains in Babylon were not at all willing to give up what they had in order to return to Jerusalem. But Yahweh sought out a remnant from among the people, searching the hearts and numbering those of humble and contrite spirit. They would return to the land of promise foreshadowing those of all ages, who in like manner, seek for God, forsaking those delicacies that the world has to offer. In the end, only these will receive the mercy of Yahweh and will enter the Kingdom of God, having obtained immortality.

## EZRA 2.2: The Times of Israel's Captivity and Restoration

Approx. Year	Kings and Governors of Judah	Kings of Babylon and Persia	Prophets and Priests	Events
639 -626 BC	Josiah reigns at 8 yrs old	Nabopolassar	Zephaniah	Josiah's Reforms, Yet Zephaniah predicts judgment
626 BC	Josiah	Nabopolassar	Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Joel, Habakkuk,	Scythian invasion of Assyria, Egypt and Judah as a precursor to Babylon.
609 BC	Jehoahaz	Nabopolassar	Jeremiah, Joel, Habakkuk	Eminent Judgment – last call to Judah for reformation – 70 year captivity predicted
606 BC	Jehoiakim	Nebuchadnezzar	Jeremiah, Habakkuk,	<b>Nebuchadnezzar attacks Jerusalem - Captivity Begins</b>
604 BC	Jehoiakim	Nebuchadnezzar	Jeremiah, Habakkuk,	Jerusalem sacked - Jehoiakim deposed
598 BC	Jehoiachin	Nebuchadnezzar	Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel	Jehoiachin and 10,000 carried to Babylon
593-586 BC	Zedekiah "I will overturn"	Nebuchadnezzar	Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel Obadiah	Zedekiah rebels, Babylon attacks - He flees but is captured
586 BC	Gedaliah	Nebuchadnezzar	Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Obadiah	Temple is Destroyed Gedaliah set in place as governor by Babylon
562-539 BC	?	Evil Merodach, Naboninus, Belshazzar	Daniel	Babylon's eminent destruction
539 BC		Darius the Mede, Cyrus the Persian	Daniel	Fall of Babylon by the Persians
536 BC	<b>Zerubbabel</b> (Shashbazzar)	<b>Cyrus</b> , now sole monarch of Persia	Daniel (90yrsold) <i>High Priest: Joshua</i>	<b>Cyrus' Decree; Jews Return; 70 Yr. Captivity Ends – Temple Construction begins</b>
535BC	<b>Zerubbabel</b> (Shashbazzar)	<b>Cyrus</b> , now sole monarch of Persia	Daniel, <i>High Priest: Joshua</i>	Temple foundation laid
530-515 BC	<b>Zerubbabel</b> (Shashbazzar)	Cyrus, Cambyses, <b>Darius Hystaspes</b> , (Artaxerxes – 521BC) Queen <b>Esther</b> (515 BC)	<b>Zechariah, Haggai, High Priest: Joshua</b> Scribe: <b>Ezra</b>	Temple constr. Resumed and finished in 516BC following Haggai's and Zechariah's prophecies
514 BC	<b>Zerubbabel</b> (Shashbazzar)	<b>Darius Hystaspes</b> , (Artaxerxes) Queen <b>Esther</b>	<b>Zechariah, Haggai, High Priest: Joshua</b> Scribe: <b>Ezra</b>	Ezra returns with 2 <sup>nd</sup> wave of exiles – 7 <sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes (Darius Hystaspes)
508-489 BC	Other governors, <b>Nehemiah</b>	<b>Darius Hystaspes</b> , (Artaxerxes) Queen <b>Esther</b>	<b>Zechariah, Malachi, High Priest: Joiakim</b> Scribe: <b>Ezra</b>	501 BC - Nehemiah returns in 20 <sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes

606

70 Years Captivity

536

586

70 Years Desolation

516

**EZRA 2.3.1**  
**The Parable of the Nethinim (Gibeonites)**  
**(Lowly Gentiles made servants of Yahweh)**

The Nethinims, among whom were the Gibeonites, returned from Babylonian exile under Ezra and Nehemiah and assisted with the rebuilding of the walls of the City of Jerusalem — a foreshadowing of the bringing in of the Gentiles into the House of David.

<b>Typical Attribute of the Gibeonites</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
Foreigners.	Acts 11:18; 13:42-48; Rom. 3:29; Ephesians 2:19	Though by nature we are foreign to Yahweh's Commonwealth, His invitation to life is open to all.
Sought out Yahweh's Salvation to entreat his favour.	Josh. 9:1-18; Psa. 45:12; Matt. 6:32-33	Yahweh is merciful to those who seek Him out. If we draw nigh unto Him, He will draw nigh unto us.
Refusing a fight, made servants in Yahweh's house.	Josh. 9:27; Psa. 72:10-14; John 18:36; Rom. 6:16; I Cor. 7:23; Rev. 22:3	We also choose whom we will serve, and such an one is our Master. Likewise, we refuse to bear arms.
Prohibited from Mixed marriages	Neh. 10:28-30; II Cor. 6:14	The world is a dangerous partner whose interests are opposed to the Truth.
Lived near the water gate, and thus were water bearers in the service of the tabernacle and Temple.	Neh. 3:26; Luke 7:44; John 3:5; John 4:10; John 13:14; Eph. 5:26; Rev. 22:1	We must also reside near our source of spiritual water and wash therein, ultimately to become a part of the "living water" in the Kingdom.
Responsible for rebuilding the city walls.	Neh. 3:6,7,26; Eph. 2:19-21; I Cor. 3: 10-15; Isa. 60:9-12; Rev. 3:12; Rev. ch. 21	We are also building upon a spiritual temple with the aim of ultimately becoming part of the building itself.
Came in old clothes with nothing to offer but their allegiance.	Isa. 52:1-3; Zech. 3:3-5; Eph. 4:21-24; Jude 1:23; Rev. 19:8	Through the righteousness of one, the "filthy rags" of men are made clean.

*“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:19-22).*

## EZRA 2.3.2 (Continued)

The Parable of the Nethinim (Gibeonites) foretells the grafting in of a Gentile remnant. The continuation of this principle operating among peoples that are generally considered as the enemies of Yahweh and His people illustrates the fact that Yahweh is not a “*respector of persons*” and is “*not willing that any should perish*”, but that He is more just and equitable and merciful than we.

In the case of the Gibeonites, they first appear before the Israelites in Joshua chapter 9 as would-be wanderers dressed in rags, deceiving Israel into making a league with them. They seem to be quite a despicable group, groveling before Joshua like lowly slaves, but in considering the whole counsel of Scripture in regards to the Gibeonites, we find a remarkable parallel with those of any age who seek out “Yahweh’s Salvation” (Joshua/Yahshua). We come before him with nothing to offer except our allegiance and willingness to become servants in the House of the Yahweh. In Joshua 9:27 we read, “*And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.*” This detail in itself is remarkable, for they are given service directly under the auspices of the Levitical priests, in the place which He should choose (first Shiloh with the Tabernacle, then Jerusalem with the Temple), doing the work necessary for ceremonial cleansing and for the offering of sacrifices. As we chronicle the Gibeonites from here, we find that they are counted amongst the great warrior heroes of David (I Chron. 12:4). Their close relationship with Israel is illustrated by the fact that the Gibeonites went with them into captivity into Babylon (Ezra 8:20); they are counted among the returnees from exile (Ezra 2:55-58; Neh. 7:6,25,46) and are later found taking part in the rebuilding of the city walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:6-7, 26). The so-called Nethinims described in these passages were partially a Gibeonite group. The *Holman Bible Dictionary* gives this definition:

“**NETHINIM** (*Neth' ih nihm*) Name meaning, ‘those given (to the priests and Levites),’ which Ezra and Nehemiah apply to persons of foreign extraction who performed menial tasks in the Temple. Moses assigned Midianite prisoners of war to the priests (32 servants; Num. 31:28, 40) and the Levites (320 servants; Num. 31:30, 47). Joshua forced the Gibeonites to serve as woodcutters and water bearers for the sanctuary (Josh. 9:27). The servants which David gave to the Levites were also likely war prisoners (Ezra 8:20).

“Representatives of the Nethinim returned from exile with Zerubbabel in 538 B.C. (Ezra 2:43-54; Neh. 7:46-56). The lists of returnees contain many foreign names suggesting their origin as prisoners of war. Despite their foreign origin, the Nethinim appear to be accepted as part of the people of Israel. They were prohibited from mixed marriages with the people of the land, and shared in the responsibility for repair of the Jerusalem city walls. The Nethinim resided in the Ophel district of Jerusalem, likely near the water gate, a site conducive with their task as water bearers.”

## EZRA 2.4

### A Story of the Redeemed (continued)

We see within the account of the return many names that would appear on the surface as a seemingly natural register of those who would return under Zerubbabel the Governor, and Joshua the high priest. Yet, within this register of names in Ezra, as well as those spoken of in the other prophetic writings following the exile, is another account or register given, as it were, hidden away from casual view by the placement of names in the text that are full of meaning. When these names are studied and compared with the full counsel of the Word before us we find in them a parallel account or story of the Redeemed. Zechariah picks up on this principle concerning those who would return to the land of promise in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah as referring to those who, in the ultimate sense, will live and reign with their king, the Lord Jesus Christ (REF. Zech. 6:10-14).

First we might note that there are eight of them, the number of regeneration and restoration – very appropriate given the context of the time in which they lived – the time of restoration, a foreshadowing of the coming restoration of the kingdom to Israel at Messiah’s return. But as before, when we delve into the otherwise benign presence of their names in the text, a vivid message to the believer bursts forth.

1. Heldai	glide swiftly (as life which is fleeting)	Psa. 90:10
2. Tobijah	Goodness of Yah	Psa. 27:13; Psa. 33:5; Jer. 31:12-14
3. Jedaiah	Known of Yah	Gal. 4:9
4. Josiah	Founded of Yah	Isa. 28:16; Zech. 4:9; Luke 6:48
5. Zephaniah	Reserved (Hidden) of Yah	Romans 11:4; Isa. 49:2; Col. 3:3-4
6. Josedech	Righteousness of Yah, Yah hath Cleansed	Jer. 23:6; Jer. 33:16
7. Helem	Strength	Psa. 18:1-2; Isa. 12:2-3
8. Hen	Grace or Favour	Ezra 9:8; Zech. 4:7; 2 Peter 1:2

Now when we put these names back into the text in the form of their meaning, the otherwise obscure passage comes to life as follows (consider in context with the broader purpose of the ecclesia).

VS 10 - Take of the captives [in Adam] of those **whose lives are fleeting** by the **goodness of Yahweh** (for **He has known** those who are called out the world or Babylon) and bring them the same day into the house **founded by Yahweh** in his son, for those **reserved for His Name**.

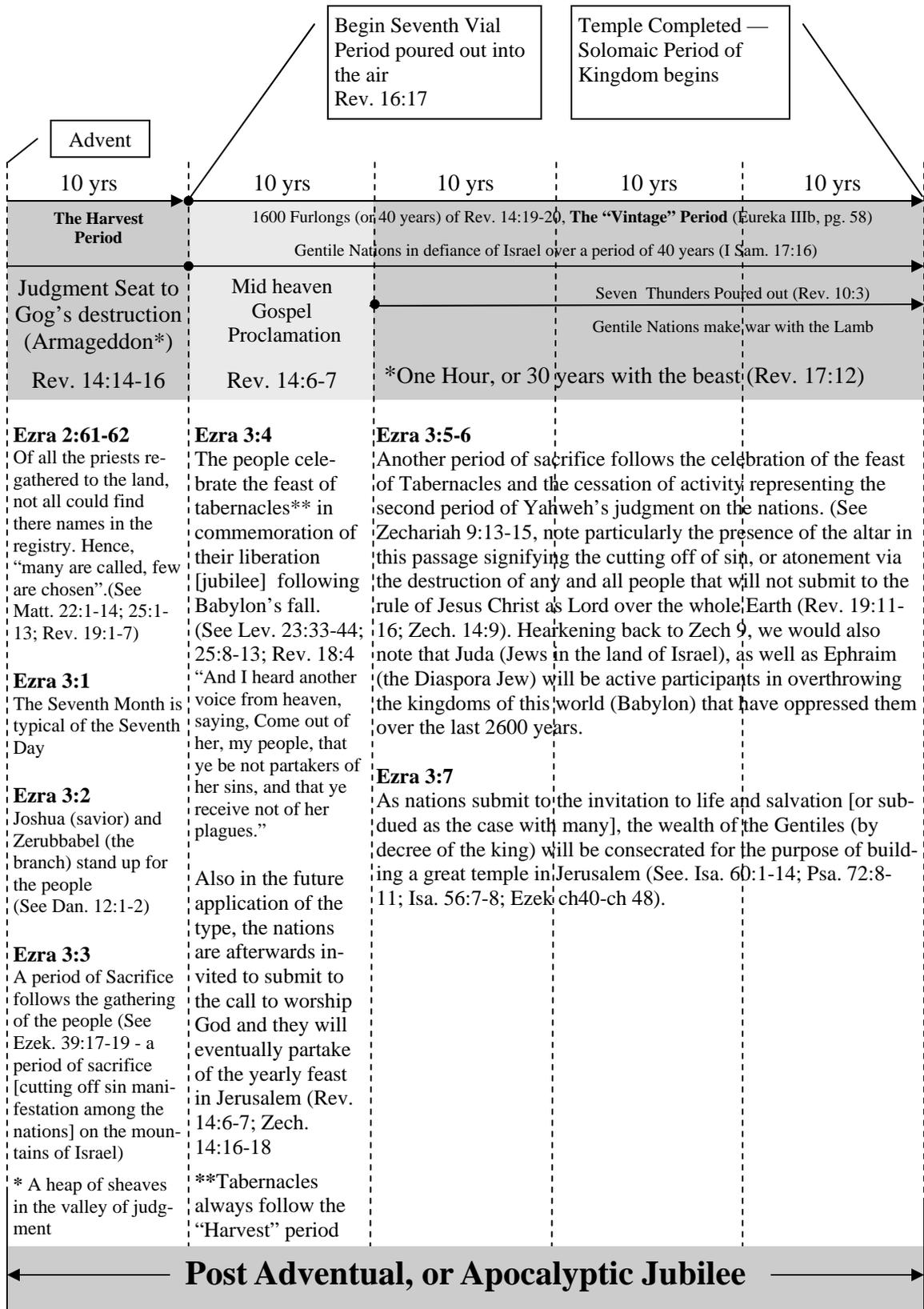
VS 11 - Then take the silver and gold [a people well refined], and make them crowns [kings encircling the throne], and appoint them for the Chief ruler, even Yahweh’s Salvation [Jesus Christ] **the son of righteousness**, the high priest.

Vs. 12 - And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh He who shall be Armies, saying, Behold the man whose name *is* The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place [to fill the earth], and he shall build the temple of Yahweh. VS. 13 - Even he shall build the temple of the Yahweh; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between both offices [king-priest].

VS 14 – And the appointment of those about the throne [crowns] shall be for **Yahweh’s strength** and for **goodness** to those who **have known** the **grace and favor reserved for those of Yahweh** as a memorial in His temple.

As with Israel following the captivity, the ecclesia has been called out of the world, yet there is work to be done in building and maintaining the house of Yahweh. There will be detractors from the work at every turn, but Yahweh has armed each of us for the task if we continue in the One Faith.

# EZRA 3.1 The Times of Ezra related to the Advent and Kingdom



## EZRA 3.2.1

### The Songs of Asaph

It is generally accepted that the Psalms as a whole are organized into five books corresponding to the five books of Moses. Certain of the Psalms recorded by Asaph and his descendants are contained within the third or Levitical book of the Psalms, which encompass Psalm 73 to Psalm 89 (shaded below). The writings of Asaph are of particular importance among these books with regard to the “sons of Asaph” of Ezra 3 . We first learn about Asaph in **I Chron. 16:1-25** where he is appointed by David to lead the Singers in the temple Worship. This is a foreshadowing of the redeemed who will sing the song of Moses and the lamb, their “song” being an expression of the gospel preached to the ends of the earth.

<b>The Psalms As Corresponding To The Pentateuch</b>		
Psalm Book	Psalm No.	Comments Relative to the Pentateuch
1	1-41	<i>The Book of Genesis</i> – Concerning man and his relationship with God. All blessing is bound up in obedience.
2	42-72	<i>The Book of Exodus</i> – Concerning Israel as a nation. The counsels of God concerning Israel’s ruin, redeemer, and redemption.
3	73-89	<i>The Book of Leviticus</i> – Concerning God’s sanctuary
4	90-106	<i>The Book of Numbers</i> – Concerning Israel in relation to the nations.
5	107-150	<i>The Book of Deuteronomy</i> – Concerning God and His Word.

This group of Psalms, having been written by those singers closest to Yahweh’s sanctuary, can offer us a prized spiritual food like none other, giving us a glimpse into the future when the faithful will fill the office of the priest (Rev. 5:9-10) and will likewise be singers in the Age to come. In Revelation 15 is a vision of those redeemed ones who, with flesh covered by divine Spirit and nature and character refined as finest gold, were singers before the Temple of Yahweh. The scene is repeated in Revelation 14:1-3 with the added detail of the Lamb before them:

*“And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living ones, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.”*

This detail underscores the connection between these immortal “singers” and the Christ Lamb when enthroned in Jerusalem, and should cause us to look at these Psalms composed by singers of old as telling us something about singers in the future. The writers of these Levitical Psalms are listed on the following page:

## EZRA 3.2.2 (Continued)

**ASAPH, PSALMS 73-83**, (H623) means *collector of the people*, from *asaph* (H622) to *gather* (in, together), to *receive, recover, take away, assemble, bring, consume, destroy*. Several usages are as follows: Isaiah 11:12 – “...and shall *assemble* (asaph) the outcasts of Israel”; Zechariah 14:2 – “For I will *gather* (asaph) all nations against Jerusalem...” This two-fold aspect of Asaph’s name has a parallel with Jezreel, meaning *God will gather*, and *God will sow*. Asaph was a Levite and leader of David’s choir who founded a school of musical composers identified as “*the sons of Asaph*”. This title was initially applied to direct descendants of Asaph, but in time may have referred to those members of the Singers who were specialist in percussion as well as being composers of music.

**KORAH, PSALM 84-85**, (H7141) *Qorach* is from the Hebrew root *qarach* (H7139) meaning *to make (self) bald*. Ezekiel 27:31 states, “*And they shall make themselves utterly bald*” (qorach). Baldness was often a sign of leprosy (Lev. 13:42-43), thus being indicative of sin nature, as well as lamentation for sin (Jer. 48:37). Korah was one of the descendants of the infamous Korah who rebelled against Moses (Number 16 and 26:9-11) but whose faithful descendants became an important branch of the singers (2 Chron. 20:19). Nevertheless, the taint of Korah’s disastrous rebellion was forever stamped upon this family of Levites by virtue of his name. The Kohathites had charge of the vessels (furniture) in the tabernacle.

**DAVID, PSALM 86**, (H1732) *daviyd*, meaning *beloved, or loving*, is from the Hebrew root *dode* (H1730). Song of Solomon 5:2 identifies “...the voice of my *beloved*” (daviyd) as the Messiah, the king and the groom who waits for his bride to be. Isaiah likewise identifies Messiah saying, “*Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard*” (Isa. 5:1). Contrawise, Jeremiah 11:15 identifies the bride-to-be as the beloved, saying, “What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many...”.

**HEMAN, PSALM 88**, (H1968) *heyman*, faithful, from (H539) *aman*, to build up or support. Numbers 11:12 – “as a *nursing father*...”; Isaiah 49:23 – “Kings shall also be thy *nursing fathers*...” Heman was the grandson of Samuel the prophet, also a Kohathite, the first of three Levites to whom was committed the vocal and instrumental music of the temple service in the reign of David (I Chron. 15:16-22).

**ETHAN, PSALM 89**, (H387) *eythan*, from (H386), *ethan*, to continue, a chieftain, hard, mighty, rough, strength, strong. Genesis 49:24 – “But his bow abode in *strength*” (ethan); Psalm 74:15 – “...driest up *mighty* rivers” (ethan). Ethhan was a Merarite Levite and one of the singers with Heman and Asaph, appointed to sound with cymbals (I Chron 15:17). Also, one of Asaph’s descendants was named Ethan (I Chron. 6:42). The Merarites had charge of the boards, bars, pillars, sockets, pins, chords, etc. of the tabernacle, and courtyard.

From the above names we see a close relationship of these Levite singers (with the addition of the king) with the operation of the sanctuary, or Yahweh’s Temple. Together the meaning of their names may enlighten us as to the meaning and purpose of these Levitical psalms.

A Summary of the meaning of the names of the five Psalmists
<b>Asaph</b> (Levi): Yahweh has been both a gatherer and a consumer (scatterer) of His people.
<b>Korah</b> (Levi): Israel has been made bald as the leper for their transgression.
<b>David</b> (Judah): Yet, Israel is Yahweh’s beloved people.
<b>Heman</b> (Levi) Thus, Yahweh will build up and save those who are faithful.
<b>Ethan</b> (Levi) Yahweh will forever establish them in His strength.

## EZRA 3.2.3 (Continued)

### OUTLINE OF THE SONGS OF ASAPH

**Psalm 73** – *Introduction* - The Sanctuary in relation to man

1. **Psalm 74** – *Israel consumed and scattered* – the Enemies in the Sanctuary
2. **Psalm 75** – *An appeal to receive Yahweh’s instruction, to be re-gathered and exalted* – Yahweh speaking from the Sanctuary
3. **Psalm 76** – *Israel’s (Yahweh’s) Enemies defeated* – Yahweh breaking forth from the Sanctuary

**Psalm 77** – An appeal to Yahweh in the day of Trouble

**Psalm 78** – An exhortation to the people to open the blind eye and deaf ear to the instruction of Yahweh’s parables.

1. **Psalm 79** - *Israel again Consumed and scattered* – the Enemies again in the Sanctuary.
2. **Psalm 80-82** – *A final appeal to receive Yahweh’s instruction and to be re-gathered and exalted* – Yahweh speaking from the Sanctuary
3. **Psalm 83** - *Israel’s (Yahweh’s) Enemies defeated in finality* – Yahweh breaking forth from the Sanctuary. This culminating Psalm of Asaph may be summarized as follows:

- I. **An appeal to Yahweh to reveal His power (to come out from the Nave)**
- II. **The enemies are judged as conspiring against those of the Sanctuary (Hidden Ones).**
- III. **Identity of the confederated enemies of the Sanctuary**

Confederated Enemies of the Sanctuary from Psalm 83		
	Name	Meaning from Strongs and Youngs Concordance
1	Edom	(H123, H119) - Red, Adam, to show blood
2	Ishmael	(H3458, H8085) – Attention, consider, hear intelligently
		(H3458, H410) – Strength, might
3	Moab	(H4124) - Water from a Father
4	Hagarenes	(H1904) Wandering
5	Gebal	(H1381, H1379) - to twist as a rope, to bound by a line, border, to set bounds
6	Ammon	(H5983, H5971) - A people, tribe, attendants, my flock
7	Amalek	(H6002) - Warlike
8	Philistines	(H6430, H6429, H6428) – roll, (as in dust), wallow self
9	Tyre	(H6865, H6876, H6864) - A rock or stone, pressed hard, as a knife, a flint, sharp stone.
10	Assur	(H804, H833) – To be straight, level, happy, honest, prosper, blessed.

**SUMMARY:** Ten is a symbolic number representing ordinal perfection. In this case, the cup of iniquity of Yahweh’s enemies has come to the full. In the near future the confederated kings of the Roman habitable (i.e., Europe; Dan. 7:20-25) will give their power unto the Beast, particularly under the direction of the Papacy, and shall make war upon the Lamb for “one hour” or a period of 30 years (Rev. 17:12-13). These future enemies are represented by the historic enemies of the past (Edom, Moab, and Ammon) who likewise failed in their effort to overthrow Judah. An acrostic arranged from the individual meanings of the names of these enemies of Israel (as they appear in order within Psalm 83) may reveal a significant warning and blessing that harmonizes with the Psalm as a whole.

## EZRA 3.2.4 (Continued)

### ACROSTIC: PSALM 83, A PSALM OF ASAPH:

*“Sons of Adam, hear and consider my strength and the water from the Father from which you have wandered. I have set the bounds of my people and my flock against whom you have brought war, wallowing yourself in sin against Me. Therefore, I will be as a rock pressed hard against you. The crooked shall be made straight, and all nations shall be blessed.”*

### OTHER SONGS OF VICTORY

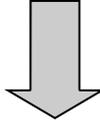
- Exodus 15:20-21, who *“took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. <sup>21</sup>And Miriam answered them, **Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea**”*, thus celebrating deliverance from Egypt and victory over Pharaoh.
- Likewise, the Song of Deborah celebrates Barak’s victory over the Midianite princes, as recorded in Judges 5:3-5: *“Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will **sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel. LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water. The mountains melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel**”*
- Each of these songs, while commemorating an historic event, also speaks prophetically of the end time judgments of Yahweh when He delivers Israel for the final time. This will commence the long anticipated day of trouble like none other, when Christ and the Saints march forth from Sinai (c.p. Isa. 63) as a great cloud and storm to defeat the Gogian host, to reinstate the throne of David upon Mt. Zion, and to overthrow the Papal Lucifer and his entire entourage as a millstone cast into the sea. For then the redeemed also will sing the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb:

*“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. **And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest**” (Rev. 15:1-4).*

## **EZRA 6.1**

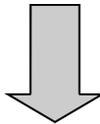
### **Cyrus the Great**

- Takes over Persia as sole monarch in the third year of his reign (See Ezra 1 and Daniel 10)
- Cyrus decrees the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple
- The people return to Israel under Ezra
- Temple foundation Laid circa 535 BC



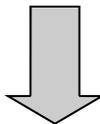
### **Cambyses**

- Cyrus dies and his son Cambyses rules briefly and also dies.
- A poor struggle ensues and throws the Empire into trouble.
- Usurper (Gaumata, who claimed to be the heir Smerdis) takes control of the empire



### **The False “Smerdis”**

- Smerdis puts down authority of all those formally loyal to Cambyses and Cyrus, including the Jewish colony in Israel
- The Samaritans, seeing a change in fortune challenge the Jews rebuilding the temple
- The Samaritans appeal to Smerdis who causes the work to stop, the Samaritans convincing the king that the Jews will rebel against him and challenge his power once they rebuild the city of Jerusalem.



### **Darius Hystaspes**

- Darius overthrows the usurpation of Smerdis circa 521 BC
- Haggai and Zechariah stir up the people to get back to work some 15 years after the temple foundation was laid.
- Samaritans again challenge the Jews rebuilding the temple
- Samaritans appeal to Darius who finds the former decree of Cyrus the Great and confirms the decree to rebuild the temple at the expense of the state.
- The counsel of the Samaritans is defeated and the Temple is finished in 516 BC
- Esther made queen in 515 BC
- 2nd wave of exiles return from Babylon in 514 BC
- Nehemiah returns in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (Darius Hystaspes)

## EZRA 7.1

### Ezra Before the King

The account of Ezra 7 begins with an account of the lineage of Ezra as being a direct descendant from Aaron. This underscores his authority as a Priest in Israel, representing our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Together the names form an acrostic that teaches us of Yahweh's mercy and protective care, just as that which He showed to the people being shepherded under Ezra.

*Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, **Ezra** the son of **Seraiah**, the son of **Azariah**, the son of **Hilkiah**, The son of **Shallum**, the son of **Zadok**, the son of **Ahitub**, The son of **Amariah**, the son of **Azariah**, the son of **Meraioth**, The son of **Zerahiah**, the son of **Uzzi**, the son of **Bukki**, The son of **Abishua**, the son of **Phinehas**, the son of **Eleazar**, the son of **Aaron** the chief priest: This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him (Ezra 7:1-6).*

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 1. Ezra      | Help / Protect   |
| 2. Seraiah   | Yah has Prevailed (Through the provision of the atonement) |
| 3. Azariah   | Yah has Helped   |
| 4. Hilkiah   | Portion of Yah (Inheritance)                               |
| 5. Shallum   | Recompense of Reward (Judgment)                            |
| 6. Zadok     | Just (Justified)   |
| 7. Ahitub    | Brother of Goodness (Brethren)                             |
| 8. Amariah   | Yah has Promised   |
| 9. Azariah   | Yah has Helped   |
| 10. Meraioth | Rebellious (the nature of all flesh)                       |
| 11. Zerahiah | Yah has Risen  |
| 12. Uzzi     | Forceful / Strengthen                                      |
| 13. Bukki    | Wasteful / make Empty (Deceivers such as the Balaamites)   |
| 14. Abishu   | Father of Plenty   |
| 15. Phinehas | Mouth of a Serpent (the flesh in sin manifestation)        |
| 16. Eleazar  | God is Helper  |
| 17. Aaron    | The Chief Priest   |

**ACROSTIC** (Working chronologically from Aaron to Ezra): Through our **Chief Priest God is a Helper** against the **Mouth of the Serpent**. He is a **Father of Plenty** against the **Wasters of the people** that **Make Empty**. **He will Strengthen** us and **has Risen** against the **Rebellious**. **Yahweh has helped** us, extending **His Promises** and **Goodness** to the **Just**. He will **Recompense a Reward** to them which is the **Portion of Yah**. **Yahweh has Helped** us and **Prevailed** to be our **Protector**.

This acrostic is a message of encouragement to the believer in evil times. Yahweh, via. His Son is our help and our shield as well as defender against the adversary of the flesh, as well as the enemies of the Truth. His Word dwelling in us and Elohim about us work together with us for His glory.

## EZRA 8.1

### Those returning under Ezra's second Journey:

<b>Phinehas</b>	<b>Mouth of a Serpent</b>
<b>Gershom</b>	<b>Drive out from possession</b>
Ithamar	Habitation of the upright
<b>Daniel</b>	<b>Judgment of God</b>
David	Beloved
Hattush	-
Shechaniah	Dwelling of Yah
<b>Pharosh</b>	<b>Expose the tender Shoot</b>
Zechariah	Yah has remembered
<b>Pahathmoab</b>	<b>Pit of Moab</b>
Elihoenai	Mine eyes are toward Yahweh
Zerahiah	Yah has Risen
Shechaniah	Yah has dwelt
Jahaziel	Beheld of God
<b>Adin</b>	<b>Given to Pleasures</b>
<b>Ebed</b>	<b>Bondmen</b>
Jonathan	Yahweh has Given
<b>Elam</b>	<b>Veiled, Hidden</b>
Jeshaiah	Yah has Saved
<b>Athaliah</b>	<b>Yah has Constrained</b>
<b>Shephatiah</b>	<b>Yah has Judged</b>
Zebadiah	Yah has Given
Michael	Who is like God
Joab	Yahweh has Fathered
Obadiah	Servant of Yah
Jehiel	God will Live
Shelomith	Peacableness
Josphiah	Yah is Adding
Bebai	-
Zechariah	Yah has Remembered
Bebai	-
<b>Azgad</b>	<b>Stern Troop</b>
Johanan	Yahweh Favored
<b>Hakkatan</b>	<b>Small</b>
Adonikam	Lord of Rising
Eliphelet	God of Deliverance
<b>Jeiel</b>	<b>Carried away of God</b>
Shemaiah	Yah has Heard
Bigvai	-
Uthai	Succoring
Zabbud	Given

### Those sent to Call the Levites:

Eliezer	God of Help
Ariel	Lion of God
Shemaiah	Yah has Heard
Elnathan	God is the Giver
Jarib	He will Contend
Elnathan	God is the Giver
Nathan	Given
Zechariah	Yah has Remembered
Meshullam	Completed, Allied
Joiarib	Yahweh will Contend
Elnathan	God is the Giver

If the meanings of the names of those returning is any indication of the character of the people, we see that the "little flock" was indeed a mixed multitude of weak and strong in the Faith. This is true also today; The ecclesia has many members, some stronger, some weaker, but all in need of being shepherded in the right direction and placing faith in Yahweh that He will deliver them from their enemies.

Many of these names define the manner in which Yahweh has dealt with His people Israel. For example, Pharosh, meaning *Expose the tender shoot*, is what Yahweh did on account of the unbelief of His people; He exposed the nation to many "wild beasts" or Gentile nations from without His vineyard, that broke in and destroyed it. Nevertheless, we can also see that Yahweh's mercies toward His people far exceed His wrath. This is characteristic of His way. Yahweh is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

## **EZRA 9.1**

### **Marrying in the Lord**

**Ezra causes the people to separate themselves from idolatry; a stern lesson with regard to marrying in the Lord.**

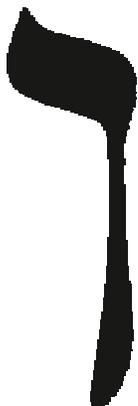
Scripture Reading: Ezra 9; I Cor. 7:34-40

Note that from the Christadelphian Statement of Faith, it is a “*Doctrine to be Rejected*” that “*marriage with the unbeliever is lawful.*”

## EZRA 9.3

י ה ו ה

### The Yahweh Name revealed in Ezra 9:8 - VAV, HOOK OR NAIL



The nail of Ezra 9:8 is from the Hebrew *yathed*, meaning a *pin or tent peg*. Having a direct connection with messiah, this nail or peg is also found as part of the Yahweh Name, particularly the letter *vawv*.

Vawv is the third letter of Yahweh and the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It may seem strange that six, the number of man, would be associated with Yahweh, but we are dealing with the sublime subject of God manifestation, beginning with Messiah, and adding to him as many as will respond to the hope of His calling. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy regarding this great mystery of how Yahweh would reveal His glory among men via six primary principles: *“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: [1] God was manifest in the flesh, [2] justified in the Spirit, [3] seen of angels, [4] preached unto the Gentiles, [5] believed on in the world, [6] received up into glory”* (I Tim. 3:14-16). Again, we see Messiah and those who believe in him at the very center of Yahweh’s purpose, that is to say, how His glory will be revealed throughout the earth.

In any case, in our limited understanding of these letters, Vawv appears to pull the whole picture together and that is fitting considering that Vawv means a *hook or Nail (such as a tent peg), that which binds or joins*. Once again our minds are drawn to the construction of the Tabernacle, where pillar and post, curtain and rod are all held together in part by hooks, pegs or pins, and stakes (**Exod. 39:40**). The metaphor likewise points forward to our redeemer who has joined Gentiles and Jews together in the house of David through his covenant sacrifice. **REF. Eph 2: 11-22.**

This joining together is a permanent arrangement, as permanent as the covenant itself, so long as we remain true to the one faith. We understand that the everlasting covenant was sealed by the sacrificial offering of Christ, that is to say, his blood. By this sin offering Christ put to death the enmity of sin nature in his body, and destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the diabolos. The permanence of the sealing of the covenant by the offering of the covenant sacrifice is a subject that pervades the whole of scripture and has a connection with the metaphor of the nail, or stake, before us.

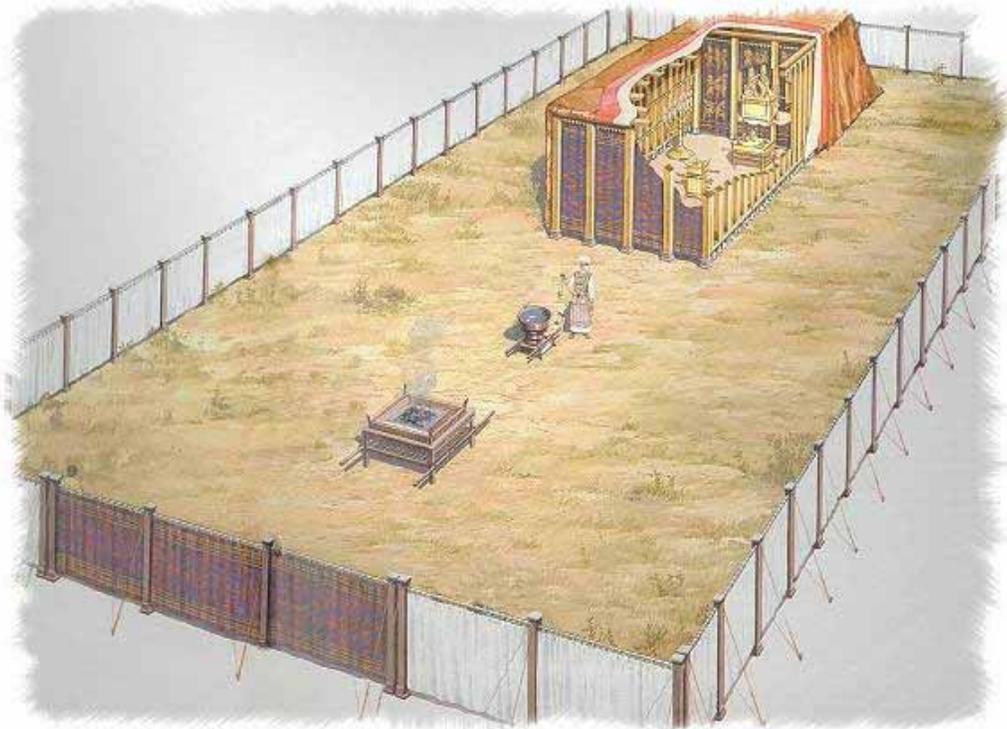
**REF. Gen. 3:15; Judges 4:21-22.** in each of these references Messiah is portrayed as the one who would fatally wound the serpent system, first as regarding his sin nature at his first

## EZRA 9.3

coming, and then globally, or ecclesiastically and nationally at his second at which time Messiah will rule as Sovereign over the whole earth. The prophet Isaiah speaks to both aspects in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

**REF. Isa. 22:20-25.** Eliakim means *El shall set up* and therefore represents the role of Messiah to “*build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down*” (Amos 9:11). But prior to this day of glory, not only would Jerusalem again be eclipsed, the kingdom overthrown, and the people taken captive, but Messiah himself would also be cut off (the removal of the nail – vs 25) as a necessary step required to ratify the covenants of promise. But Yahweh has also raised up Jesus from the dead and he has been established as a sure place for the people of the covenant. Moreover, he and the glorified Saints will be established in Jerusalem forever. Together, they will comprise Yahweh’s Spiritual temple, styled “New Jerusalem” in the apocalypse, filled with vessels of honor for the glory and good pleasure of the king.

In Eureka, Bro. Thomas writes that “*The word of the only wise Deity when incarnated, is therefore fitly represented by ‘a nail in a sure place.’ Of this nail, the spirit in Zechariah [10:4-5] said, that it should come out of Judah. The ‘sure place’ in which it is to be fastened, Ezra [9:8] designates as ‘Yahweh Elohim’s holy place,’ in which [Ezra] and a remnant of the captivity returned from Babylon, were then sojourning—that is, in Jerusalem... then a peacable, quiet, and established habitation*” **REF. Isa. 32:18; 33:20.**



## EZRA 10.1

### Ezra's Call to Reform

The message of Ezra 10:7-9 reveals principles of Yahweh that are consistent throughout the Bible.

*“And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem; <sup>8</sup>And that whosoever would not come **within three days**, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away. <sup>9</sup>Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It was the **ninth month**, on the twentieth day of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain.”*

The numbers three (3) and nine (9) figure prominently in these verses and are both include elements of the Gospel message - hope coupled with responsibility for our actions.

Three is the number of completeness and number of resurrection. Jesus was raised on the third day and likewise Israel, will be raised up on the third millennial day (Hosea 6:1-2). The resurrection to life immortal is termed “The Hope of Israel”.

Nine is the number of Judgment and is connected with the number three because judgment will occur following the resurrection. Moreover, when natural Israel is judged and raised up with the gathering of the people to Israel and hearing the voice of Messiah, the nations at large will then be judged. REF: Judges 4:1-3; Jer. 39:1-2; Ezek. 24:1-2; Haggai 2:18.

**SUMMARY:** The proclamation of the Gospel is a call to men and women to set themselves toward Zion (Gal. 4:26). Judah and Benjamin (*Praise and Son of the right hand*) are representative of those who answer the call, availing themselves of Yahweh's Salvation. Yahweh has set aside three millennial days wherein man has an opportunity to answer this call. The third day coincides with the kingdom age. Those who fail to answer the call, as those in Ezra's time, will forfeit their inheritance.

## EZRA 10.2

### Ezra's Call to Reform

The message of Ezra 10:15 reveals the high and holy calling to which believers have been called through faith in Christ Jesus.

*“<sup>14</sup>Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.*

*<sup>15</sup>Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah were employed about this matter: and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them. <sup>16</sup>And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, with certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by their names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. <sup>17</sup>And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.”*

**Jonothan** - Yahweh has Given (Yahweh has given to us the way of the tree of life).

**Ashahel** - God has made (Yahweh made the covenant with Abraham, confirmed in His son, by whom we have received the atonement).

**Jahaziah** - Yah will behold (Yahweh sees all of our works, considers our motives and records our deeds - good and bad).

**Tikvah** - Bound together ( We are bound in covenant with Yahweh through Yahshua, His son. He is the nail in Ch. 9 by which the whole house is made sure).

**Meshullam** - Allied, Completed (the separation of Israel's leaders from idolatry was completed on the tenth month. Ten (10) is the number of completeness. The ecclesia has been allied and will be completed when the true bride - the vessels of honor - is separated from all impurity. New Jerusalem will then be complete).

**Shabbethai** - Sabbath rest (Once cleansed from mortality and sin, the true bride will enter her rest with Yahweh in the millennium and beyond).