**Ezra 8-10**- May 6th

List of the Family Heads Returning With Ezra

**8**These are the family heads and those registered with them who came up with me from Babylon during the reign of King Artaxerxes:

**2**of the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom; of the descendants of Ithamar, Daniel; of the descendants of David, Hattush **3**of the descendants of Shekaniah; of the descendants of Parosh, Zechariah, and with him were registered 150 men; **4**of the descendants of Pahath-Moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah, and with him 200 men; **5**of the descendants of Zattu, Shekaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him 300 men; **6**of the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him 50 men; **7**of the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiah son of Athaliah, and with him 70 men; **8**of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him 80 men; **9**of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him 218 men; **10**of the descendants of Bani, Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him 160 men; **11**of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him 28 men; **12**of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him 110 men; **13**of the descendants of Adonikam, the last ones, whose names were Eliphelet, Jeuel and Shemaiah, and with them 60 men; **14**of the descendants of Bigvai, Uthai and Zakkur, and with them 70 men.

The Return to Jerusalem

**15**I assembled them at the canal that flows toward Ahava, and we camped there three days. When I checked among the people and the priests, I found no Levites there. **16**So I summoned Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah and Meshullam, who were leaders, and Joiarib and Elnathan, who were men of learning, **17**and I ordered them to go to Iddo, the leader in Kasiphia. I told them what to say to Iddo and his fellow Levites, the temple servants in Kasiphia, so that they might bring attendants to us for the house of our God. **18**Because the gracious hand of our God was on us, they brought us Sherebiah, a capable man, from the descendants of Mahli son of Levi, the son of Israel, and Sherebiah’s sons and brothers, 18 in all; **19**and Hashabiah, together with Jeshaiah from the descendants of Merari, and his brothers and nephews, 20 in all. **20**They also brought 220 of the temple servants - a body that David and the officials had established to assist the Levites. All were registered by name.

**21**There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. **22**I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, “The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to Him, but His great anger is against all who forsake Him.” **23**So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and He answered our prayer.

**24**Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests, namely, Sherebiah, Hashabiah and ten of their brothers, **25**and I weighed out to them the offering of silver and gold and the articles that the king, his advisers, his officials and all Israel present there had donated for the house of our God. **26**I weighed out to them 650 talents of silver, silver articles weighing 100 talents, 100 talents of gold,**27**20 bowls of gold valued at 1,000 darics, and two fine articles of polished bronze, as precious as gold.

**28**I said to them, “You as well as these articles are consecrated to the Lord. The silver and gold are a freewill offering to the Lord, the God of your ancestors. **29**Guard them carefully until you weigh them out in the chambers of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem before the leading priests and the Levites and the family heads of Israel.” **30**Then the priests and Levites received the silver and gold and sacred articles that had been weighed out to be taken to the house of our God in Jerusalem.

**31**On the twelfth day of the first month we set out from the Ahava Canal to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us, and He protected us from enemies and bandits along the way. **32**So we arrived in Jerusalem, where we rested three days. **33**On the fourth day, in the house of our God, we weighed out the silver and gold and the sacred articles into the hands of Meremoth son of Uriah, the priest. Eleazar son of Phinehas was with him, and so were the Levites Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui. **34**Everything was accounted for by number and weight, and the entire weight was recorded at that time.

**35**Then the exiles who had returned from captivity sacrificed burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven male lambs and, as a sin offering, twelve male goats. All this was a burnt offering to the Lord. **36**They also delivered the king’s orders to the royal satraps and to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, who then gave assistance to the people and to the house of God.

Ezra’s Prayer About Intermarriage

**9**After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. **2**They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness.”

**3**When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. **4**Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice. **5**Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the Lord my God **6**and prayed:

“I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens.**7**From the days of our ancestors until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today.

**8**“But now, for a brief moment, the Lord our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in His sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. **9**Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and He has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.

**10**“But now, our God, what can we say after this? For we have forsaken the commands **11**you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: ‘The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. **12**Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.’

**13**“What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins deserved and have given us a remnant like this. **14**Shall we then break your commands again and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable practices? Would you not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? **15**Lord, the God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.”

The People’s Confession of Sin

**10**While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a large crowd of Israelites - men, women and children - gathered around him. They too wept bitterly. **2**Then Shekaniah son of Jehiel, one of the descendants of Elam, said to Ezra, “We have been unfaithful to our God by marrying foreign women from the peoples around us. But in spite of this, there is still hope for Israel. **3**Now let us make a covenant before our God to send away all these women and their children, in accordance with the counsel of my lord and of those who fear the commands of our God. Let it be done according to the Law.**4**Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it.”

**5**So Ezra rose up and put the leading priests and Levites and all Israel under oath to do what had been suggested. And they took the oath. **6**Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God and went to the room of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. While he was there, he ate no food and drank no water, because he continued to mourn over the unfaithfulness of the exiles.

**7**A proclamation was then issued throughout Judah and Jerusalem for all the exiles to assemble in Jerusalem. **8**Anyone who failed to appear within three days would forfeit all his property, in accordance with the decision of the officials and elders, and would himself be expelled from the assembly of the exiles.

**9**Within the three days, all the men of Judah and Benjamin had gathered in Jerusalem. And on the twentieth day of the ninth month, all the people were sitting in the square before the house of God, greatly distressed by the occasion and because of the rain. **10**Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have been unfaithful; you have married foreign women, adding to Israel’s guilt.**11**Now honor the Lord, the God of your ancestors, and do his will. Separate yourselves from the peoples around you and from your foreign wives.”

**12**The whole assembly responded with a loud voice: “You are right! We must do as you say. **13**But there are many people here and it is the rainy season; so we cannot stand outside. Besides, this matter cannot be taken care of in a day or two, because we have sinned greatly in this thing. **14**Let our officials act for the whole assembly. Then let everyone in our towns who has married a foreign woman come at a set time, along with the elders and judges of each town, until the fierce anger of our God in this matter is turned away from us.” **15**Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah, supported by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite, opposed this.

**16**So the exiles did as was proposed. Ezra the priest selected men who were family heads, one from each family division, and all of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to investigate the cases, **17**and by the first day of the first month they finished dealing with all the men who had married foreign women.

Those Guilty of Intermarriage

**18**Among the descendants of the priests, the following had married foreign women:

From the descendants of Joshua son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib and Gedaliah. **19**(They all gave their hands in pledge to put away their wives, and for their guilt they each presented a ram from the flock as a guilt offering.)

**20**From the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

**21**From the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel and Uzziah.

**22**From the descendants of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad and Elasah.

**23**Among the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah and Eliezer.

**24**From the musicians: Eliashib.

From the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem and Uri.

**25**And among the other Israelites: From the descendants of Parosh:

Ramiah, Izziah, Malkijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malkijah and Benaiah.

**26**From the descendants of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth and Elijah.

**27**From the descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad and Aziza.

**28**From the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai and Athlai.

**29**From the descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluk, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal and Jeremoth.

**30**From the descendants of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui and Manasseh.

**31**From the descendants of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malkijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, **32**Benjamin, Malluk and Shemariah.

**33**From the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh and Shimei.

**34**From the descendants of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, **35**Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi, **36**Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, **37**Mattaniah, Mattenai and Jaasu.

**38**From the descendants of Binnui:Shimei, **39**Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, **40**Maknadebai, Shashai, Sharai,**41**Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, **42**Shallum, Amariah and Joseph.

**43**From the descendants of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel and Benaiah.

**44**All these had married foreign women, and some of them had children by these wives.