

# Ezra 10:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah, (the same is Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

## Analysis

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**Also of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah, (the same is Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer**—the list now moves from priests to Levites, who assisted in temple service (Numbers 3:5-10). Six Levites appear here, representing a smaller percentage than priests, possibly because Levites had fewer returnees overall (Ezra 8:15-19).

The parenthetical note (**the same is Kelita**) indicates alternative name or title. This careful identification shows the scribe's concern for precision—ensuring readers knew exactly who was being named. The double-naming prevents confusion and maintains historical accuracy. This attention to detail demonstrates the record's reliability and seriousness.

The names again carry theological significance: Judah means 'praise Yahweh,' yet stood guilty of covenant violation. Eliezer means 'God is my help,' yet sought help through forbidden marriage alliance. The Levites' violation was particularly shameful, as they were specially set apart (hivdil, same root as the separation from foreign wives commanded in 10:11) for holy service.

## Historical Context

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Levites served crucial roles in temple worship, teaching Torah, and maintaining religious purity among the people. Their violation of covenant law through intermarriage particularly undermined their teaching authority. The dual name

Kelaiah/Kelita may reflect Babylonian versus Hebrew naming, common among exiles. Kelita appears later in Nehemiah 8:7 among Levites teaching the law—possibly the same person after repentance and restoration, demonstrating God's redemptive grace even after serious sin.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. What does Levitical violation teach about the danger facing those in ministry roles—how proximity to holy things doesn't guarantee holy living?
2. How does the careful identification of Kelaiah/Kelita demonstrate the importance of accuracy and accountability in church records?
3. What warning does the presence of Levites in the list offer to modern ministry leaders about vulnerability to compromise?

## Interlinear Text

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וְמִן פְּלִוִּים יְזַבֵּד יְשָׁמֵעַ וְיְקָלֵיהַ הָאָא  
H4480 Also of the Levites H3881 H3107 H8096 H7041 H1931

אֶלְיָזֶר: יְהוֹדָה פְּתַחְיָה קְלִיטָא  
the same is Kelita Pethahiah Judah and Eliezer  
H7042 H6611 H3063 H461