

Ezra 10:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;

Analysis

And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem. The leadership issues official kol ("voice/proclamation") throughout the province. The phrase "**throughout Judah and Jerusalem**" indicates formal governmental decree reaching all returned exiles. This wasn't optional invitation but mandatory summons backed by civil authority (verse 8's penalties confirm this).

The designation "**children of the captivity**" (bene haggolah) is theologically significant. It identifies the community by their shared experience of exile—they are the returned remnant who experienced God's judgment and restoration. This identity marker reminded them why the issue mattered: their fathers' unfaithfulness had caused the exile; repeating those sins risked forfeiting the restoration. Being "children of the captivity" meant learning from history.

The command to "**gather themselves together unto Jerusalem**" required travel and disruption for those living in other towns (Ezra 2 lists settlements throughout Judah). Mandatory assembly demonstrated the issue's gravity—this wasn't routine business but existential crisis requiring universal participation. The centralization in Jerusalem (the temple city) emphasized the religious, not merely civil, nature of this covenant reckoning.

Historical Context

The returned exiles were dispersed in various towns throughout Judah (Nehemiah 11), but Jerusalem remained the governmental and religious center. Requiring everyone to assemble there was logistically significant, especially given the time frame (verse 9 shows only three days' notice). This demonstrates the leadership's urgency and authority to compel attendance.

The phrase "children of the captivity" appears repeatedly in Ezra-Nehemiah as a technical term for the returned exiles, distinguishing them from peoples who had never left or had remained in the land. This group self-identified as the faithful remnant preserving Israel's covenant identity. Their shared exile experience created corporate identity and accountability.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the designation "children of the captivity" function as both identity marker and warning about repeating ancestral sins?
2. What does the mandatory assembly teach about the difference between private sin and corporate covenant violation?
3. How should the church today maintain corporate accountability while respecting individual conscience?

Interlinear Text

וַעֲבֹד יְרוּ	ק וְלֹ	בְּיְהוּדָה הַ	יְרוּשָׁלַם:	לְכָל
And they made proclamation	H6963	throughout Judah	and Jerusalem	H3605
H5674		H3063	H3389	
בְּנֵי יְ	הַגּוֹלָה הַ	לְהִקָּבֵץ יְ		
unto all the children	of the captivity	that they should gather themselves together		
H1121	H1473	H6908		
יְרוּשָׁלַם:				
and Jerusalem				
H3389				

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org