

Ezra 2:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.

Analysis

The children of Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two. The family of Azgad (אַזְגָּד) bears a name meaning 'stern is Gad' or 'Gad is strong,' combining the tribal name Gad (גָּד) with az (אֶז, strong/fierce). This theophoric name invokes one of Israel's twelve tribes, suggesting either ancestral connection to Gad's territory in Transjordan or theological testimony to divine strength. Their 1,222 members made them one of the larger returning families, demonstrating substantial commitment to restoration.

The name's emphasis on strength proves significant: return from exile required not mere sentiment but robust determination. Those bearing 'strength' as family identity needed to embody that quality, facing 900-mile journey, hostile opposition, and massive rebuilding task. The tribe of Gad historically occupied Transjordan's eastern frontier, known for military prowess (1 Chronicles 12:8 describes Gadites as 'men of might'). Azgad family thus carried warrior heritage applied to spiritual restoration.

Theologically, the family name teaches that covenant faithfulness requires divine strength, not human willpower alone. The phrase 'Gad is strong' confesses dependence on God's power. This anticipates New Testament teaching that believers fight spiritual battles 'strong in the Lord and in his mighty power' (Ephesians 6:10). The Azgad family's substantial size suggests God blessed those who trusted His strength.

Historical Context

Azgad appears in later records, with Ezra 8:12 noting that Johanan son of Azgad led 110 additional family members in the second return under Ezra (458 BC). This demonstrates continued family leadership across multiple restoration phases. The family also appears in Nehemiah 10:15 among covenant signers, confirming sustained commitment to renewal.

The number 1,222 represents significant population, requiring extensive logistical organization for the journey. Persian administrative records likely documented such movements, though few Persian documents regarding Jewish affairs survive besides those preserved in Ezra-Nehemiah itself.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the name 'Gad is strong' challenge modern self-reliance by pointing to divine strength?
2. What parallels exist between Azgad's return journey and the Christian's spiritual pilgrimage?
3. How can believers cultivate the determination needed for costly obedience exemplified by returning families?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי י	עֲזָגָד	אֶלֶף	מֵאֵת יָם	עֶשְׂרִי יָם	וּשְׁנָיִם:
The children	of Azgad	a thousand	hundred	twenty	and two
H1121	H5803	H505	H3967	H6242	H8147

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 7:17 (Parallel theme): The children of Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty and two.

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