

Ezra 2:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six.

Analysis

The children of Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six. Bigvai (בִּגְוַי, Bigvai, possibly 'in my body' or from Persian 'fortunate') led one of the largest returning families—2,056 people. This substantial number indicates a prominent clan that maintained cohesion through exile. Size didn't guarantee spiritual vitality (many large families remained in Babylon), but it did provide organizational strength for rebuilding.

The name's possible Persian origin suggests some families adopted aspects of Babylonian culture while maintaining Jewish identity. This wasn't necessarily syncretism but cultural adaptation—a pattern continued in the diaspora. Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah all bore pagan names while remaining faithful to Yahweh. The tension between cultural engagement and spiritual compromise required constant vigilance.

Bigvai also appears in Ezra 8:14 and Nehemiah 10:16, showing multigenerational participation in restoration. The family's continued prominence through successive returns and covenant renewals demonstrates sustained commitment beyond initial enthusiasm.

Historical Context

The size of Bigvai's clan (over 2,000) made it the second-largest family group in the return census. Such numbers required considerable organization for the 900-mile journey from Babylon. Travel occurred in family units under ancestral leadership, preserving social structure that would facilitate resettlement.

Large families provided economic advantage in rebuilding. Agricultural work, construction, and defense all benefited from numerous hands. The census numbers weren't merely statistical—they represented labor force, military strength, and reproductive capacity essential for national restoration after demographic catastrophe.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does the balance between cultural adaptation (Persian names) and covenant faithfulness teach about engaging secular culture?
2. How can large, established families leverage resources and influence for kingdom purposes today?
3. What patterns from multigenerational faithfulness should inform family discipleship and legacy-building?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי י'	בְּנֵי י'	אַלְפֵי ים	חֲמִשָּׁ ים	וְשֵׁשָׁה:
The children	of Bigvai	two thousand	fifty	and six
H1121	H902	H505	H2572	H8337
