

Ezra 2:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Hashum, two hundred twenty and three.

Analysis

The children of Hashum, two hundred twenty and three. Hashum (חשום, Chashum, possibly 'rich' or 'renowned') led a family of 223 returnees. This name appears throughout restoration literature: Ezra 10:33 (members guilty of intermarriage), Nehemiah 7:22, 8:4 (Ezra's platform assistant), 10:18 (covenant signatory). The recurring presence across various contexts suggests a socially prominent family.

The possible meaning 'rich' creates ironic tension: these families abandoned Babylonian wealth for Judean poverty. True riches consisted not in accumulated goods but covenant faithfulness. Jesus's teaching that one cannot serve God and mammon (Matthew 6:24) applies here—Hashum's family chose spiritual wealth over material comfort.

The appearance of Hashum members in Ezra 10's intermarriage crisis reveals that even faithful returnee families faced compromise temptation. Returning physically didn't guarantee spiritual purity. This reminds us that positional righteousness requires ongoing sanctification; past obedience doesn't immunize against present failure.

Historical Context

By the time of Ezra 10 (approximately 458 BC, eighty years after initial return), intermarriage with pagan neighbors had corrupted the community. Even families who had sacrificed to return faced assimilation pressures. The prohibition against

mixed marriages wasn't ethnic prejudice but covenant protection—pagan spouses led hearts away from Yahweh (as Solomon's foreign wives did).

Nehemiah 8:4 places a Hashum descendant on the wooden platform during Ezra's public Torah reading, suggesting the family maintained prominence and spiritual leadership despite some members' failures. This demonstrates that family legacy includes both faithfulness and failure, requiring each generation to choose obedience afresh.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the intermarriage crisis among returnees illustrate ongoing need for vigilance against spiritual compromise?
2. What does Hashum's prominence in both faithful service and covenant violation teach about grace and accountability?
3. How can believers resist materialism's seduction while steward resources faithfully?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי י'	חֲשׁוּם	מֵאֵת י'	עֶשְׂרִים	וּשְׁלֹשָׁה:
The children	of Hashum	two hundred	twenty	and three
H1121	H2828	H3967	H6242	H7969

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 7:22 (Parallel theme): The children of Hashum, three hundred twenty and eight.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org