

# Ezra 2:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Azmaveth, forty and two.

## Analysis

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**The children of Azmaveth, forty and two.** Azmaveth (אַזְמָבֵת, Azmaveth, meaning 'strong as death' or 'death is strong') appears both as a personal name and place name in Scripture. 1 Chronicles 12:3 names Azmaveth as one of David's mighty warriors, while Nehemiah 12:29 identifies it as a village north of Jerusalem. The parallel account in Nehemiah 7:28 calls it Beth-azmaveth ('house of Azmaveth'), suggesting a settlement named after the warrior.

The number forty-two may seem small, yet these represented faithful covenant members who chose identity with Jerusalem over Babylonian prosperity. The term bene ('בָּנָה, 'children' or 'sons of') indicates clan or family association, preserving community structure through displacement. Each numbered person made the 900-mile journey, facing uncertainty and hardship.

Theologically, this verse demonstrates that God values small, faithful remnants. Jesus later affirmed this principle: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I' (Matthew 18:20). The kingdom doesn't advance through numerical superiority but through covenant faithfulness. Azmaveth's descendants, though few, contributed to the restored community that maintained messianic hope until Christ's coming.

## Historical Context

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Beth-azmaveth (Azmaveth) was located approximately four miles north of Jerusalem near Anathoth. Like many Benjaminite towns, it suffered during the

Babylonian conquest. The preservation of distinct town identity through exile shows how Jewish communities in Babylon maintained genealogical and geographical records, preserving pre-exilic social structure. These records became crucial for re-establishing property rights upon return. The forty-two returnees, though numerically small, represented continuity of a specific community across two generations of displacement. Such detailed record-keeping enabled the returnees to resume their ancestral inheritances, fulfilling the land promises despite seventy years of absence.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's inclusion of small groups like Azmaveth's forty-two challenge modern obsession with numerical growth and significance?
2. What does the preservation of small-town identity teach about the importance of community and local covenant faithfulness?
3. How can believers maintain distinctive identity and heritage while living in culturally hostile environments?

## Interlinear Text

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וּשְׁנַיִם:	אֶרְבָּעִים	עִזְמָה	וְתִתְבִּין
<b>The children</b>	<b>of Azmaveth</b>	<b>forty</b>	<b>and two</b>
H1121	H5820	H705	H8147

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