

Ezra 2:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

Analysis

The children of Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one. Ramah (רָמָה, Ramah, meaning 'height' or 'high place') and Gaba (גָּבָהּ, Gaba or Geba, meaning 'hill') were neighboring Benjaminite towns with rich biblical history. Ramah was Samuel's birthplace and residence (1 Samuel 1:19, 7:17), where he judged Israel and anointed both Saul and David. Gaba/Geba served as a Levitical city (Joshua 21:17) and military outpost (1 Samuel 13:3).

Jeremiah 31:15 contains Rachel's haunting lament at Ramah, prophetically applied to Herod's slaughter of infants (Matthew 2:18). The verse also promises restoration: 'your children shall come again to their own border' (Jeremiah 31:17). The 621 returnees from Ramah and Gaba literally fulfilled this prophecy—Rachel's children returning from exile.

Theologically, joining these two towns in one count demonstrates practical cooperation between neighboring communities. The number 621 represents substantial population, showing these weren't obscure villages but significant settlements. Their return demonstrates that God's restoration touched both famous locations (Ramah, associated with Samuel) and less prominent places (Gaba), showing comprehensive covenant renewal rather than selective rebuilding.

Historical Context

Ramah lay approximately five miles north of Jerusalem on the central ridge route, making it strategically significant. During the Babylonian conquest, Ramah served

as a collection point for deportees (Jeremiah 40:1), adding poignant significance to its return. Gaba/Geba lay three miles northeast of Jerusalem, marking Israel's northern boundary during the divided monarchy (2 Kings 23:8). Archaeological excavations at Tell el-Ful (likely ancient Gaba/Gibeah) and er-Ram (ancient Ramah) confirm Iron Age occupation and later Persian-period resettlement. The combined return of 621 people from these adjacent towns suggests coordinated planning and mutual support, essential for surviving the journey and re-establishing communities in Judah's devastated landscape.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the literal fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:15-17 in Ramah's return strengthen confidence in prophetic promises?
2. What does the cooperation between Ramah and Gaba teach about neighboring churches supporting each other in kingdom work?
3. How should believers honor historical spiritual heritage while avoiding nostalgia that prevents fresh obedience?

Interlinear Text

The children	of Ramah	and Gaba	six	hundred	twenty	and one
H1121	H7414	H1387	H8337	H3967	H6242	H259

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