

Ezra 2:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah,

Analysis

The children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah— Three more Nethinim families receive mention in this meticulous census. **Giddel** (גִּדְלֵל, giddel) means "he has made great" or "magnified," from the root gadal (to grow, be great). Remarkably, a servant-class family bore a name celebrating greatness—perhaps ironic (greatness through humble service) or testimonial (God magnified humble servants). This name appears twice in Nethinim lists (also Ezra 2:56), suggesting either two distinct families or a particularly prominent clan.

Gahar (גָּהָר, possibly "hiding place" or "lurking place") may reference refuge or concealment, perhaps indicating the family's protective role in temple precincts or their own experience of finding refuge in God's service. **Reaiah** (רְאֵיָה, re'ayah, "Yahweh has seen") expresses profound theological truth: the God who sees (El Roi, Genesis 16:13) notices even the lowest servants. That Nethinim bore names proclaiming God's attentive care demonstrates their theological sophistication and personal faith.

The name Reaiah especially resonates with Hagar's revelation of El Roi—"the God who sees me." Servants throughout history have been overlooked, rendered invisible by social hierarchies. Yet Yahweh sees, knows, and preserves their names for eternity in Scripture. This anticipates Jesus's teaching that even a cup of cold water given in His name will be remembered (Matthew 10:42).

Historical Context

The dual mention of Giddel (verses 47 and 56) creates interpretive questions. Either two distinct Giddel families existed among the Nethinim, or scribal repetition occurred, or the name indicated a clan with multiple branches. Ancient genealogies sometimes listed family heads multiple times when clans subdivided. Regardless, the preservation demonstrates careful record-keeping even for servant classes.

Reaiah appears elsewhere in Scripture as a Judahite name (1 Chronicles 4:2), indicating Nethinim adopted typical Israelite names or possibly some Israelites joined Nethinim service. The boundaries between native Israelites and incorporated foreigners became increasingly permeable in post-exilic Judaism, unified by Torah observance and temple service rather than pure ethnicity.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does the name Giddel ("he has made great") teach about God's ability to magnify humble servants and elevate the lowly?
2. How does Reaiah ("Yahweh has seen") encourage believers performing unnoticed service that human eyes overlook but God observes?
3. What theological significance lies in formerly foreign servant families adopting Hebrew names that proclaimed Yahweh's attributes and actions?

Interlinear Text

רְאֵיָה:	בָּנִים	בָּנִים	בָּנִים	בָּנִים	בָּנִים	בָּנִים
The children	of Giddel	The children	of Gahar	The children	of Reaiah	

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