

Ezra 2:51

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

Analysis

The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur—

Three more Nethinim families receive mention as the census approaches completion. **Bakbuk** (בַּקְבֻּק, baqbuq, "bottle" or "flask") uses onomatopoeia—the Hebrew word sounds like liquid pouring from a vessel. This evocative name may reference ancestral work with temple libations, oil storage, or water-carrying responsibilities. That a family proudly bore this name shows dignity in practical service.

Hakupha (חֻקְפָּא, possibly "bent" or "crooked") might indicate physical characteristic, work posture (bent over tasks), or metaphorical humility. **Harhur** (חֲרָחֹר, from charar, "to burn" or "be inflamed") may reference fever, burning zeal, or work with temple fires and altars. If the latter, it connects the family directly to sacrificial service—maintaining altar fires that consumed offerings day and night.

These occupational or descriptive names demonstrate that the Nethinim didn't hide their service identity but embraced it publicly. Rather than seeking prestigious titles, they bore names describing their actual work—pouring, bending, burning. This models gospel humility: finding identity in faithful service rather than impressive credentials, echoing Jesus washing disciples' feet (John 13:1-17).

Historical Context

The Nethinim's various occupational responsibilities—water-carrying (implied by "bottle"), wood-cutting, fire-tending—enabled the complex sacrificial system. Daily burnt offerings, additional Sabbath and festival sacrifices, and individual offerings required enormous logistical support. Priests could focus on ritual purity and sacrificial procedures because Nethinim handled physical labor.

The preservation of these specific family names through exile demonstrates the community's commitment to maintaining detailed genealogical records. During seventy years in Babylon, families without temple to serve could have lost identity. Instead, they preserved records and passed down heritage, anticipating eventual return. This forward-looking faith enabled the rapid restoration of temple service upon return.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does Bakbuk's name ("bottle/flask") teach about finding significance in practical, behind-the-scenes service roles?
2. How can believers today embrace their calling with the Nethinim's dignity rather than seeking more prestigious identities?
3. What does the preservation of occupational names (bottle, bent, burning) teach about the sanctity of all work performed as unto the Lord?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי	בִּקְבֹּךְ וְיָן	בְּנֵי	חֲקֻפָּה א	בְּנֵי	חֲרֻר:
The children	of Bakbuk	The children	of Hakupha	The children	of Harhur
H1121	H1227	H1121	H2709	H1121	H2744

