

# Ezra 5:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and his companions the Apharsachites, which were on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king:

## Analysis

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The formal letter introduction identifies the senders and recipient with precise bureaucratic terminology. Tatnai (Tattenai in Aramaic) served as governor (pechah) of the Trans-Euphrates satrapy—the vast region "on this side the river" encompassing Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine. Shethar-boznai likely served as his secretary or deputy. The "Apharsachites" (Apharsekaye) were Persian officials or inspectors stationed throughout the satrapy.

The careful documentation of official titles and geographic jurisdiction reflects authentic Persian chancellery style. Archaeological discoveries of Persian-period correspondence confirm this precise administrative language. The letter's preservation in the biblical text demonstrates God's providential arrangement of historical documentation—what began as a challenge became evidence of divine faithfulness.

## Historical Context

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The Trans-Euphrates satrapy (Abar Nahara) was one of the Persian Empire's most important provinces, encompassing territory from the Euphrates to Egypt. Tatnai's position placed him over a vast administrative region with significant strategic importance as the corridor between Mesopotamia and Egypt. His investigation of

Jerusalem was part of standard provincial oversight, particularly important during the unstable early years of Darius's reign.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does God use even hostile or neutral authorities to document and preserve evidence of His work in history?
2. What does the formal, respectful tone of Persian administration teach about engaging with secular authorities while serving God?

## Interlinear Text

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בָּעֵבֶר	רִ	פְּנֵי	תַּתָּנֵי	תַּתָּנֵי	שֶׁל	חִ	דַּי	אָגְרָפָא	פָּרָשׁ	גַּן	
<b>The copy</b>	<b>of the letter</b>		<b>H1768</b>	<b>sent</b>		<b>H7972</b>		<b>that Tatnai</b>	<b>governor</b>		<b>on this side</b>
H6573				H7972				H8674	H6347		H5675
הַנָּהָר	וְשֵׁתֶת	רִ	גַּבֵּה	הַ	בָּזְבּוּנִי			וְכֹתֵת	וְתַּתָּה	אַפְּרָסְכִּי	אַ
<b>the river</b>					<b>H0</b>			<b>and Shetharboznai</b>	<b>and his companions</b>	<b>the Apharsachites</b>	<b>H1768</b>
H5103					H8370			H3675		H671	
בָּעֵבֶר	רִ	גַּבֵּה	הַ	עַל	דָּרִי	וְשֵׁתֶת	מֶלֶךְ				
<b>on this side</b>	<b>the river</b>			<b>unto</b>	<b>Darius</b>	<b>the king</b>					
H5675	H5103			H5922	H1868		H4430				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezra 4:9** (Parallel theme): Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites,

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