

Ezra 7:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah,

Analysis

The phrase 'Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia' marks temporal transition of approximately fifty-eight years from temple completion (516 BC) to Ezra's arrival (458 BC). Ezra's genealogy tracing to Aaron validates his priestly credentials and teaching authority. The gap between temple completion and Torah teaching shows that physical restoration precedes but doesn't guarantee spiritual vitality. Structure alone doesn't create faithfulness—communities need Scripture instruction.

Historical Context

Artaxerxes I (465-424 BC) succeeded his father Xerxes I (485-465 BC, the Ahasuerus of Esther). The nearly sixty-year gap saw the temple operating but spiritual drift occurring—intermarriage with pagans, neglect of Torah, and compromised community life. Ezra's teaching ministry addressed these spiritual deficits. His Aaronic genealogy established both legal right to priesthood and cultural credibility for Torah teaching authority.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does the gap between temple completion and Torah teaching reveal about the inadequacy of mere religious infrastructure without biblical instruction?
2. How does Ezra's priestly genealogy demonstrate that spiritual authority requires both divine calling and community recognition?

Interlinear Text

וְאַחֵר	הַדְּבָרִים	הָאֵלֹהִים	בְּמֶלֶךְ	אֲרֻחְשֵׁשְׁטָא	מֶלֶךְ		
Now after	these things	H428	in the reign	of Artaxerxes	king		
H310	H1697		H4438	H783	H4428		
פַּרְסָא	עֶזְרָא	בֶּן	שֶׁרָיָה	בֶּן	עֲזַרְיָה	בֶּן	חִלְקִיָּה׃
of Persia	Ezra	the son	of Seraiah	the son	of Azariah	the son	of Hilkiah
H6539	H5830	H1121	H8304	H1121	H5838	H1121	H2518

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 2:1 (Kingdom): And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.

2 Kings 22:4 (Parallel theme): Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people:

Ezra 6:14 (Kingdom): And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

Ezra 7:12 (Kingdom): Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time.

Ezra 7:21 (Kingdom): And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily,

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