

# Ezra 8:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia, and I told them what they should say unto Iddo, and to his brethren the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God.

## Analysis

**And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia**—צִוָּה (tsivvah, commanded) indicates Ezra's apostolic authority, not mere request. אִידּוֹ (Iddo, 'timely' or 'His witness') is הָרֹשׁ (harosh, the chief/leader), suggesting he headed a significant Levitical settlement at קָסִיפִיא (Casiphia, 'silvery' or 'silver place'), possibly named for refining activity or economic function. This location apparently housed an organized Levitical community with recognized leadership structure.

**And I told them what they should say unto Iddo, and to his brethren the Nethinims**—נְתִינִים (Netinim, 'given ones') were temple servants descended from Gibeonites (Joshua 9:27) and other groups 'given' to assist Levites (Numbers 3:9, 8:19). **That they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God**—מְשָׁרְתִים (mesharetim, ministers/servants) for בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ (beit-Eloheinu, house of our God). Ezra's diplomatic approach—working through recognized leaders rather than direct conscription—shows wisdom in mobilizing volunteers for challenging service.

## Historical Context

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Casiphia represents one of several organized Jewish communities in Babylon that chose not to return to Judah. The presence of both Levites and Nethinim suggests it functioned as a religious center, perhaps with its own synagogue or teaching facility. The prosperity and security of Babylonian Jewish life (reflected in Nehemiah's high position as cupbearer, Nehemiah 1:11) created disincentive to return to war-torn, economically depressed Judah. Ezra needed to persuade men to abandon comfortable lives for hardship.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

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

## Study Questions

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1. What does Ezra's diplomatic approach through recognized leaders teach about mobilizing people for difficult ministry?
2. How does the existence of thriving diaspora communities (like Casiphia) challenge simplistic notions of obedience as geographic return?
3. In what ways do modern believers face similar tensions between comfortable assimilation and costly kingdom service?

## Interlinear Text

וְאֶנְצָא הָ	אֶנְצָא הָ	עַל אָזְתָם	עַל אָזְתָם	אָזְתָם	אָזְתָם	בְּכִסְפִּי אָ	בְּכִסְפִּי אָ	הַמִּלְקָם וְ	הַמִּלְקָם וְ
<b>And I sent</b>	H853	H5921	<b>unto Iddo</b>	<b>the chief</b>	<b>Casiphia</b>	<b>at the place</b>			

אֲדֹן	אֶל	לְדִבָּר	דִּבָּר יִם	בְּפִיחָה מִ	אֲשִׁימָה	and I told	H6310	them what	they should say	H413	unto Iddo
H7760		H1697		H1696		H112					

לְבַבְיָא בְּמִקְמָה וּבְכִסְפִּי אֶת־בְּנֵתָנוֹנִים אֶל־אֶחָיו וְאֶל־  
the Nethinims Casiphia at the place that they should bring  
and to his brethren H251 H5411 H3703 H4725 H935

לְבִתְּנוּן אֱלֹהִינוּ לְבִתְּהַנְּתָן מִשְׁרָתָת יְמֵינוּ  
H0 unto us ministers for the house of our God H430  
H8334 H1004

## Additional Cross-References

**Ezra 2:43** (Parallel theme): The Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of Hasupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

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