

Ezra 8:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males.

Analysis

Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males. This Shechaniah clan (distinct from verse 3's Shechaniah of Pharosh) brought the largest contingent—three hundred males. Jahaziel means 'God sees' or 'God perceives,' a name expressing confidence in divine omniscience and care. The omission of a specific leader's name (unlike other verses) is textually curious—some manuscripts supply 'Ben-Jahaziel' (son of Jahaziel), but the Hebrew literally reads 'the son of Jahaziel,' leaving ambiguity.

The three hundred males (possibly 800-1000 total with families) represented massive commitment. This number exceeded typical family units, suggesting either unusual fertility, multiple branches joining together, or inclusion of servants/dependents. The willingness of such a large group to relocate demonstrates both strong leadership and shared conviction. Large-scale migration required coordination, resources, and courage—raiders and hardships threatened the 900-mile journey.

That Shechaniah brought the most people may indicate economic prosperity (enabling more to afford the journey) or spiritual fervor (more answered God's call). Either way, it shows that some families contributed disproportionately to restoration, bearing greater share of sacrifice and risk.

Historical Context

The four-month journey from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:9) with three hundred males plus families required extensive preparation. Provisions, pack animals, protection arrangements, and travel organization for possibly 1,000 people demanded significant resources and planning. The ancient Persian road system (developing under Darius and Artaxerxes) made such large-scale migration feasible but still dangerous. Archaeological evidence confirms that caravan travel through Mesopotamia required careful timing to avoid both summer heat and winter rains.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Jahaziel's name ('God sees') encourage believers facing costly obedience that others might not recognize or appreciate?
2. What does the largest family contingent (300 males) teach about how some are called to bear disproportionate share of kingdom work?

Interlinear Text

בְּן	שְׁכַנְיָהּ ה	בְּן	יָחִזְיָא ל	וְעִמּוֹ	שָׁלֹשׁ
Of the sons	of Shechaniah	Of the sons	of Jahaziel	H5973	and with him three
H1121	H7935	H1121	H3166		H7969
הַזְכָּרִים: מֵאָה וְ					
hundred	males				
H3967	H2145				

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