

Ezra the Priest-Scribe against the backdrop of Babylonian Temples Officials

Date (BCE)	Major Events	The leadership in Jerusalem	Ruler
605	Rise of Neo-Babylonian Empire	ירמיהו, יהויקים	Nebuchad- nezzar
597	Jehoiachin's Exile	יהויכין	
586	Destruction of the Temple	צדקיה	
תשרי	Murder of Gedaliah		
	Vision of the future Temple	יחזקאל	
538	Cyrus Declaration First Wave of Return The Foundation of the second Temple Construction of the Altar Delay in Construction of the Temple	ששבצר נשיא יהודה זרובבל בן שאלתיאל פחת יהודה יהושע בן יהוצדק כהן גדול	Cyrus כורש
530	[Does not appear in Tanakh]		Cambyse כמבודי
522	Renewal of the Construction on the Temple	חגי, זכריה	Darius I דריוש
520 אלול, תשרי, חשון, כסלו, שבט			
518 ד כסליו	Fasts and their continued observance	זכריה ז-ח	
516 ג אדר	Inauguration of the second Temple	עזרא ו טו	
486	חשיארש (כסרכס) Khshayarsha (Xerxes)	אסתר (עזרא ד, ו) מלאכי ?	Xerxes I אחשורוש
464		עזרא ז, ט, נחמיה	Artaxerxes I
458	Arrival of Ezra		ארתחשסתא א
445	Arrival of Nehemiah	נחמיה	
433	בריתת אמנה		
331-425	ג' ארתחשסתא ב', ארתחשסתא ג', ארסס, דרויוש ג'		

The Temple of Sais	495-399
Conquest of Israel by Alexander the Great, Hellenistic Ruler	332
The Temple of Onias	167-73 CE
Hasmonean Rule	167
Independent Hasmonean State	63- 141
Herodian Rule (Herod and Descendants)	40
Rule of the Roman Prefect	6 CE
Rebellions - Destruction of the Second Temple, and the Bar-Kokhba Revolt	66 CE

1. **זכריה א, א-יז: בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁמִינִי בַשָּׁנָה שְׁתַּיִם לְדָרוֹשׁ הָיָה דְבַר ה' אֶל זְכַרְיָה בֶן בִּרְכִיָּה בֶן עֲדוּ הַנְּבִיא לֵאמֹר:**
קִצְּפָה ה' עַל אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם קִצְּפָה: ... אַךְ דְּבַרְי וְחִקֵי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אֶת עַבְדֵי הַנְּבִיאִים הַלְוֹא הַשִּׁיגוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וַיִּשׁוּבוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ:
כַּאֲשֶׁר זָמַם ה' צְבָאוֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת לָנוּ כַּדְרָכֵינוּ וְכַמַּעֲלָלֵינוּ בְּנֵן עֲשָׂה אִתָּנוּ:

בְּיוֹם עֲשָׂרִים וָאַרְבָּעָה לַעֲשֻׁתֵי עֶשְׂרֵה חֹדֶשׁ הוּא חֹדֶשׁ שֶׁשֶׁבֶט בַּשָּׁנָה שְׁתַּיִם לְדָרוֹשׁ הָיָה דְבַר ה' אֶל זְכַרְיָה בֶן בִּרְכִיָּה בֶן עֲדוּ הַנְּבִיא לֵאמֹר: רָאִיתִי ... וַיֹּאמְרוּ הַתְּהַלְכֵנוּ בְּאֶרֶץ וְהִנֵּה כָל הָאָרֶץ יִשְׁבֶּת וְשָׁקֶטָה: וַיַּעַן מַלְאָךְ ה' וַיֹּאמֶר ה' צְבָאוֹת עַד מַתִּי אַתָּה לֹא תִרְחַם אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת עָרֵי יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר זָעַמְתָּה זֶה שְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה: וַיַּעַן ה' אֶת הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי דְבָרִים טוֹבִים דְּבָרִים נְחֻמִּים: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי קְרָא לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר ה' צְבָאוֹת הַקְּנֵאתִי לִירוּשָׁלַם וְלְצִיּוֹן קְנֵאתִי גְדוּלָה: וְקִצְּפָה גְדוּלָה אֵלַי קִצְּפָה עַל הַגּוֹיִם הַשְּׂאֲנָנִים אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי הַצְּפֵתִי מֵעַט וְהִמָּה עֲזָרוּ לְרַעְיָה: לָכֵן כֹּה אָמַר ה' שְׁבַתִּי לִירוּשָׁלַם בְּרַחֲמִים בֵּיתִי יִבְנֶה בְּיָמֶיךָ הַצְּבָאוֹת וְקוּ וַיִּטָּה עַל יְרוּשָׁלַם: עוֹד קְרָא לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר ה' צְבָאוֹת עוֹד תִּפּוּצְנָה עָרֵי מִטּוֹב וְנִחַם ה' עוֹד אֶת צִיּוֹן וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, this word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo ..The LORD was very angry with your fathers. ...But the warnings and the decrees with which I charged My servants the prophets overtook your fathers— did they not?—and in the end they had to admit, ‘The LORD has dealt with us according to our ways and our deeds, just as He purposed.’”

On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month of the second year of Darius—the month of Shebat—this word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo: In the night, I had a vision. I saw... We have roamed the earth, and have found all the earth dwelling in tranquility. Thereupon the angel of the LORD exclaimed, “O LORD of Hosts! How long will You withhold pardon from Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, which You placed under a curse seventy years ago?”The LORD replied with kind, comforting words to the angel who talked with me. Then the angel who talked with me said to me: “Proclaim! Thus said the LORD of Hosts: I am very jealous for Jerusalem for Zion and I am very angry with those nations that are at ease; for I was only angry a little, but they overdid the punishment. Assuredly, thus said the LORD: I graciously return to Jerusalem. My House shall be built in her—declares the LORD of Hosts—the measuring line is being applied to Jerusalem. Proclaim further: Thus said the LORD of Hosts: My towns shall yet overflow with bounty. For the LORD will again comfort Zion; He will choose Jerusalem again.”

2. **זכריה ב, ה-ט: וְאֵשָׂא עֵינַי וְאָרָא וְהִנֵּה אִישׁ וּבְיָדוֹ תַבַּל מִדָּה: וַאֲמַר אָנֹכִי אֵתָה הַלֵּךְ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לְמַד אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם לְרֵאוֹת כַּמָּה רַחֲבָה וְכַמָּה אָרְבָּה: ... וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי רֵץ דְּבַר אֶל הַנַּעַר הַלֵּךְ לֵאמֹר פְּרוּזוֹת תִּשָּׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם מִרַב אָדָם וּבְהִמָּה בְּתוֹכָהּ: וְאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָּהּ נֹאֵם ה' חוֹמַת אֵשׁ סָבִיב וּלְכַבֹּד אֶהְיֶה בְּתוֹכָהּ:**

I looked up, and I saw a man holding a measuring line. “Where are you going?” I asked. “To measure Jerusalem,” he replied, “to see how long and wide it is to be.” ...The former said to him, “Run to that young man and tell him: “Jerusalem shall be peopled as a city without walls, so many shall be the men and cattle it contains. And I Myself—declares the LORD—will be a wall of fire all around it, and I will be a glory inside it.

3. **עזרא ד, א-ו: וְשָׁמְעוּ צָרִי יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵימָן כִּי־בָנִי הַגּוֹלָה בּוֹנִים הֵיכָל לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וַיִּגְשׁוּ אֶל־זְרַבְבָּל וְאֶל־רֹאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהֶם בְּנֵינָה עִמָּכֶם כִּי כָכֶם נִדְרָשׁ לְאַלְהֵיכֶם וְלוֹ אֲבִיחֵנוּ זִבְחִים מִימֵי אֶסֶר חֲדָן מִלֶּךְ אֲשׁוּר הַמַּעֲלָה אֲתָנוּ פָּה: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם זְרַבְבָּל וַיִּשְׁוֹעַ וַיִּשְׁאַר רֹאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת לִישְׂרָאֵל לֹא־לָכֶם וְלָנוּ לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לְאַלְהֵינוּ כִּי אֲנַחְנוּ יָחַד נִבְנֶה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר אָנּוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹרֵשׁ מִלֶּךְ־פָּרַס: וַיְהִי עִם־הָאָרֶץ מִרְפָּים יְדֵי עַם־יְהוּדָה וּמְבַהֲלִים אוֹתָם לְבָנוֹת:**

וּסְכָרִים עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹעֲצִים לְהִפָּר עֲצָתָם כָּל־יְמֵי בִּזְיָתָם מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס וְעַד־מַלְכוּת דָּרְיֹוֹשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרַס: וּבְמַלְכוּת אַחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ
בְּתַחֲלַת מַלְכוּתוֹ כָּתְבוּ שְׁטָנָה עַל־יֹשְׁבֵי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלָם:

When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the LORD God of Israel, they approached Zerubbabel and the chiefs of the clans and said to them, "Let us build with you, since we too worship your God, having offered sacrifices to Him since the time of King Esarhaddon of Assyria, who brought us here." Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the chiefs of the clans of Israel answered them, "It is not for you and us to build a House to our God, but we alone will build it to the LORD God of Israel, in accord with the charge that the king, King Cyrus of Persia, laid upon us." Thereupon the people of the land undermined the resolve of the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build. **They bribed ministers in order to thwart their plans all the years of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia. And in the reign of Ahasuerus, at the start of his reign, they drew up an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.**

4. **נחמיה א, ב-יא:** דַּבְּרֵי נְחֵמְיָה בֶן חַכְלִיָה וַיְהִי בַחֲדָשׁ נִסְחֹן שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים וְאַנְי הָיִיתִי בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבִּירָה: וַיְבֹא חֲנַנְיָ אֶחָד מֵאֲנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים מִיְהוּדָה וְאַשְׁאֵלָם עַל הַיְהוּדִים הַפְּלִיטָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאַרוּ מִן הַשְּׂבִי וְעַל יְרוּשָׁלָם: וַיֹּאמְרוּ לִי הַנְּשָׂאָרִים אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁאַרוּ מִן הַשְּׂבִי שָׁם בְּמַדִּינָה בְּרָעָה גְדֹלָה וּבְחִרְפָּה וְחוּמַת יְרוּשָׁלָם מְפֹרָצָה וְשַׁעֲרֶיהָ נִצְתוּ בְּאֵשׁ: וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַעִי אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה יִשְׁבַּתִּי וְאַבְרָהָה וְאַתְאֲבָלָה יָמִים וְאֵהִי צֹם וּמִתְפַּלֵּל לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם: וְאָמַר אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְחֹסֵד לְאֶהֱבָיו וְלִשְׂמֵרֵי מִצְוֹתָיו: תְּהִי נָא אֲזִנְךָ קְשִׁיבָה וְעֵינֶיךָ פְּתוּחוֹת לִשְׁמַע אֵל תְּפִלַּת עַבְדְּךָ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מִתְפַּלֵּל לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם וְלַיְלָה... אֲנִי אֲדַנְיָ תְּהִי נָא אֲזִנְךָ קְשִׁיבָה אֶל־תְּפִלַּת עַבְדְּךָ וְאֵל תְּפִלַּת עַבְדְּיֶיךָ הַחֹפְצִים לִירְאָה אֶת שִׁמְךָ וְהַצְּלִיחָה נָא לְעַבְדְּךָ הַיּוֹם וְתִנְהוּ לְרַחֲמִים לִפְנֵי הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וְאַנְי הָיִיתִי מִשְׁקָה לְמֶלֶךְ:

The narrative of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah: In the month of Kislev of the twentieth year, when I was in the fortress of Shushan, Hanani, one of my brothers, together with some men of Judah, arrived, and I asked them about the Jews, the remnant who had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. They replied, "The survivors who have survived the captivity there in the province are in dire trouble and disgrace; Jerusalem's wall is full of breaches, and its gates have been destroyed by fire." When I heard that, I sat and wept, and was in mourning for days, fasting and praying to the God of Heaven. I said, ... O Lord! Let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to hold Your name in awe. Grant Your servant success today, and dispose that man to be compassionate toward him!" I was the king's cupbearer at the time.

5. **נחמיה ב:** וַיְהִי בַחֲדָשׁ נִסְחֹן שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׁתָּא הַמֶּלֶךְ יָוִן לִפְנֵי וְאַשָׂא אֶת הַיָּוִן וְאַתְנָה לְמֶלֶךְ וְלֹא הָיִיתִי רַע לִפְנֵי: וַיֹּאמְרוּ לִי הַמֶּלֶךְ מְדוּעַ פָּגַיְךָ רָעִים וְאַתָּה אֵינְךָ חוֹלָה אִין זֶה כִּי אִם רָע לֵב וְאִירָא הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד: וְאָמַר לְמֶלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם יַחֲיֶה מְדוּעַ לֹא יָרַעוּ פְּנֵי אֲשֶׁר הָעִיר בֵּית קְבָרוֹת אֲבֹתֵי חַרְבָּה וְשַׁעֲרֶיהָ אֲכָלוּ בְּאֵשׁ: וַיֹּאמְרוּ לִי הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־מָה זֶה אַתָּה מְבַקֵּשׁ וְאַתְּפַלֵּל אֶל אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם: וְאָמַר לְמֶלֶךְ אִם עַל הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב וְאִם יִטֵּב עַבְדְּךָ לִפְנֵיךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁלַחְנִי אֶל יְהוּדָה אֶל עִיר קְבָרוֹת אֲבֹתֵי וְאַבְרָהָה: וַיֹּאמְרוּ לִי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַשֶּׁגֶל יוֹשִׁיבָת אֶצְלוֹ עַד־מָתִי יִהְיֶה מִהַלְכָּךָ וּמָתִי תִשׁוּב וְיִטֵּב לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְיִשְׁלַחְנִי וְאַתְנָה לוֹ זָמָן: וְאָמַר לְמֶלֶךְ אִם עַל הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב אֲגִדֹּל וְתִנּוּ לִי עַל פְּחוֹת עֶבֶר הַנִּהְרָה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבִירוּנִי עַד אֲשֶׁר אֲבֹא אֶל־יְהוּדָה: וְאֶגְרַת אֶל־אֶסְף־שֹׁמֵר הַפְּרָדָס אֲשֶׁר לְמֶלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן לִי עֲצִים לְקָרוֹת אֶת־שַׁעֲרֵי הַבִּירָה אֲשֶׁר־לְבַיִת וְלַחֲמוֹת הָעִיר וְלְבַיִת אֲשֶׁר אֲבֹא אֵלָיו וְיִתְּנֵנִי לִי הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּדְאֱלֹהֵי הַטּוֹבָה עָלַי: וְאַבּוֹא אֶל־פְּחוֹת עֶבֶר הַנִּהְרָה וְאַתְנָה לָהֶם אֶת אֲגָרוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ וְיִשְׁלַח עִמִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁרֵי חֵיל וּפָרְשִׁים:

וְיִשְׁמַע סַבְלַט הַחַרְנִי וְטוֹבִיָּה הַעֵבֵד הָעַמֹּנִי וְיָרַע לָהֶם רָעָה גְדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר בָּא אֲדָם לְבַקֵּשׁ טוֹבָה לְבָנָי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל:

וְאָבֹא אֶל יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֵהִי שָׁם יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה: וְאָקוּם לַיְלָה אֲנִי וְאֲנָשִׁים מֵעֵט עִמּוֹ וְלֹא הִגַּדְתִּי לְאָדָם מִה אֱלֹהֵי נִתְּן אֵל לְבִי לַעֲשׂוֹת לִירוּשָׁלַם וּבִהְמָה אֵין עִמִּי בִי אִם־הִבְהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי רֹכֵב בָּהּ: וְאֶצְאֶה בְּשַׁעַר הַגֵּיאַ לַיְלָה וְאֶל פְּנֵי עֵין הַתְּנָן וְאֶל שַׁעַר הָאֲשָׁפֹת וְאֵהִי שָׂבֵר בַּחֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר־הֵם פְּרוּצִים וְשַׁעְרֶיהָ אֲכָלוּ בְּאֵשׁ: וְאֶעֱבֹר אֶל שַׁעַר הָעֵין וְאֶל בְּרַכַּת הַמְּלָךְ וְאֵין מְקוֹם לְבִהְמָה לַעֲבֹר תַּחְתָּי: וְאֵהִי עֹלָה בְּנַחֲלֵי לַיְלָה וְאֵהִי שָׂבֵר בַּחֹמָה וְאֲשׁוּב וְאָבֹא בְּשַׁעַר הַגֵּיאַ וְאֲשׁוּב: וְהַסְּגָנִים לֹא יָדְעוּ אֲנִי הִלַּכְתִּי וְמָה אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה וְלִיְהוּדִים וְלַפְּהֲלָיִים וְלַחֲרִים וְלַסְּגָנִים וְלִיתֵר עֹשֶׂה הַמְּלָאכָה עַד־כֵּן לֹא הִגַּדְתִּי: וְאוֹמֵר אֲלֵהֶם אַתֶּם רֹאִים הֲרַעְהוּ אֲשֶׁר אֲנַחֲנוּ בָּהּ אֲשֶׁר יְרוּשָׁלַם חֲרָבָה וְשַׁעְרֶיהָ נִצְתוּ בְּאֵשׁ לָנוּ וּנְבַנְהָ אֶת־חֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְלֹא נִהְיֶה עוֹד חֲרָפָה: וְאֶגִּיד לָהֶם אֶת יַד אֱלֹהֵי אֲשֶׁר הֵיאַל טוֹבָה עָלַי וְאֶף דְּבַרְי הַמְּלָךְ אֲשֶׁר אָמַר לִי וַיֹּאמְרוּ נְקוּם וּבְנִינוּ וַיַּחֲזְקוּ יְדֵיהֶם לְטוֹבָה: וַיִּשְׁמַע סַבְבַּלַּט הַחֲרָנִי וְטַבְיָה הַעֲבָד הַעַמּוֹנִי וְגִלְשָׁם הָעַרְבִי וַיִּלְעְגוּ לָנוּ וַיִּבְזוּ עָלֵינוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ מָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹשִׂים הַעַל הַמְּלָךְ אַתֶּם מוֹרְדִים: וְאֲשִׁיב אוֹתָם דְּבַר וְאוֹמֵר לָהֶם אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם הוּא יַצִּילֵנוּ לָנוּ וְאֲנַחֲנוּ עֲבָדָיו נְקוּם וּבְנִינוּ וְלָכֶם אֵין חֶלֶק וְצַדִּיקָה וְזַכְרוֹן בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, wine was set before him; I took the wine and gave it to the king—I had never been out of sorts in his presence. The king said to me, “How is it that you look bad, though you are not ill? It must be bad thoughts.” I was very frightened, but I answered the king, “May the king live forever! How should I not look bad when the city of the graveyard of my ancestors lies in ruins, and its gates have been consumed by fire?” The king said to me, “What is your request?” With a prayer to the God of Heaven, I answered the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor with you, send me to Judah, to the city of my ancestors’ graves, to rebuild it.” With the consort seated at his side, the king said to me, “How long will you be gone and when will you return?” So it was agreeable to the king to send me, and I gave him a date. Then I said to the king, “If it please the king, let me have letters to the governors of the province of Beyond the River, directing them to grant me passage until I reach Judah; likewise, a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the King’s Park, directing him to give me timber for roofing the gatehouses of the temple fortress and the city walls and for the house I shall occupy.” The king gave me these, thanks to my God’s benevolent care for me. When I came to the governors of the province of Beyond the River I gave them the king’s letters. The king also sent army officers and cavalry with me. When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard, it displeased them greatly that someone had come, intent on improving the condition of the Israelites. I arrived in Jerusalem. After I was there three days

I got up at night, I and a few men with me, and telling no one what my God had put into my mind to do for Jerusalem, and taking no other beast than the one on which I was riding, I went out by the Valley Gate, at night, toward the Jackals’ Spring and the Dung Gate; and I surveyed the walls of Jerusalem that were breached, and its gates, consumed by fire. I proceeded to the Fountain Gate and to the King’s Pool, where there was no room for the beast under me to continue. So I went up the wadi by night, surveying the wall, and, entering again by the Valley Gate, I returned. The prefects knew nothing of where I had gone or what I had done, since I had not yet divulged it to the Jews—the priests, the nobles, the prefects, or the rest of the officials. Then I said to them, “You see the bad state we are in—Jerusalem lying in ruins and its gates destroyed by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and suffer no more disgrace.” I told them of my God’s benevolent care for me, also of the things that the king had said to me, and they said, “Let us start building!” They were encouraged by [His] benevolence. When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard, they mocked us and held us in contempt and said, “What is this that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?” I said to them in reply, “The God of

Heaven will grant us success, and we, His servants, will start building. But you have no share or claim or stake in Jerusalem!”

6. **נחמיה ה, יד-טו:** גַם מִיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶתִּי לְהִנָּחֵם בְּאַרְצָה יְהוּדָה מִשְׁנַת עָשָׂרִים וְעַד שְׁנַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׁתָּא הַמֶּלֶךְ שָׁנִים שְׁתַּיִם עֲשָׂרָה אֲנִי וְאֲחִי לֶחֶם הַפֶּחֶה לֹא אֲכַלְתִּי: וְהַפְּחוֹת הָרֵאשִׁינִים אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי הַכְּבִידוֹ עַל-הָעָם וַיִּקְלְחוּ מֵהֶם בְּלֶחֶם יַיִן אַחַר כִּסְף־שְׁקָלִים אַרְבָּעִים גַּם נִעְרִיָּהֶם שָׁלְטוּ עַל הָעָם וְאֲנִי לֹא־עָשִׂיתִי כֵן מִפְּנֵי יְרֵאתִי אֱלֹהִים:

Furthermore, from the day I was commissioned to be governor in the land of Judah—from the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes until his thirty-second year, twelve years in all—neither I nor my brothers ever ate of the governor’s food allowance. The former governors who preceded me laid heavy burdens on the people, and took from them for bread and wine more than forty shekels of silver. Their servants also tyrannized over the people. But I, out of the fear of God, did not do so.

7. **נחמיה ו, יד-יט:** זָכְרָה אֱלֹהֵי לְטוֹבִיָּה וּלְסַנְבַּלֵּט כְּמַעֲשֵׂיוֹ אֱלֹהִים וְגַם לְנוֹעַדְיָה הַנְּבִיאָה וּלְיִתֵר הַנְּבִיאִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ מִן־רְאִים אוֹתִי: וְתַשְׁלֵם הַחוּמָה בְּעֶשְׂרִים וְחַמְשָׁה לְאַלּוּל לְחַמְשִׁים וּשְׁנַיִם יוֹם: וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְעוּ כָל אוֹיְבֵינוּ וַיִּרְאוּ כָּל הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סָבִיבֵתֵינוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ מְאֹד בְּעֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי מֵאֵת אֱלֹהֵינוּ נַעֲשֶׂתָה הַמְּלָאכָה הַזֹּאת: גַּם בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם מַרְבָּיִם חָרְוּ יְהוּדָה אֲגָרְתֵיהֶם הוֹלְכוֹת עַל־טוֹבִיָּה וְאֲשֶׁר לְטוֹבִיָּה בְּאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:

“O my God, remember against Tobiah and Sanballat these deeds of theirs,^c *his*.” and against Noadiah the prophetess, and against the other prophets that they wished to intimidate me!” The wall was finished on the twenty-fifth of Elul, after fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard it, all the nations round about us were intimidated, and fell very low in their own estimation; they realized that this work had been accomplished by the help of our God. Also in those days, the nobles of Judah kept up a brisk correspondence with Tobiah, and Tobiah with them. Many in Judah were his confederates, for he was a son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam son of Berechiah. They would also speak well of him to me, and would divulge my affairs to him. Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

8. **נחמיה ז, ד:** וְהָעִיר רַחֲבַת יְדִיִּם וְגֹדוֹלָה וְהָעָם מְעַט בְּתוֹכָהּ וְאִין בְּתִים בְּנִיִּים:
The city was broad and large, the people in it were few, and houses were not yet built.

9. **נחמיה פרק ח:** וַיֹּאסְפוּ כָּל הָעָם כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד אֶל הַרְחֹב אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי שַׁעַר הַמַּיִם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְעֹזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר לְהִבְיֵא אֶת־סֹפֵר תוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה ה' אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל: וַיָּבִיא עֹזְרָא הַכֹּהֵן אֶת תוֹרַת הַלֶּפְנֵי הַקֹּהֵל מֵאִישׁ וְעַד־אִשָּׁה וְכָל מִבֵּין לְשִׁמְעַע בְּיוֹם אֶחָד לַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי: וַיִּקְרָא בּוֹ לִפְנֵי הַרְחֹב אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי שַׁעַר הַמַּיִם מִן הָאוֹר עַד מַחְצִית הַיּוֹם כִּי־גָד הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנְּשִׁים וְהַמְּבִינִים וְאֲזַנִּי כָּל־הָעָם אֶל סֹפֵר הַתּוֹרָה: וַיַּעֲמֵד עֹזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר עַל־מַגְדֵּל עַל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְדָבָר וַיַּעֲמֵד אֶצְלוֹ.... וַיִּפְתַּח עֹזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר לְעֵינֵי כָּל־הָעָם כִּי־מַעַל כָּל־הָעָם הִיָּה וּכְפָתַחוּ עֲמֻדוֹ כָּל־הָעָם: וַיִּבְרַךְ עֹזְרָא אֶת ה' הָאֱלֹהִים הַגָּדוֹל וַיַּעֲבֹר כָּל־הָעָם אִמּוֹן אִמּוֹן בְּמַעַל יְדֵיהֶם וַיִּקְדּוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַה' אֲפִים אֶרְצָה: ... וַיִּקְרָאוּ בְּסֹפֵר בְּתוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים מִפְּרָשׁ וְשׁוֹם שְׁכָל וַיִּבְיֵנוּ בַּמִּקְרָא: וַיֹּאמֶר נְחֻמְיָה הוּא הַתַּרְשִׁישָׁא וְעֹזְרָא הַכֹּהֵן הַסֹּפֵר וְהַלְוִיִּם הַמְּבִינִים אֶת־הָעָם לְכָל־הָעָם הַיּוֹם קִדְשֵׁהוּא לַה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֶל־תַּתְּאֲבִלוּ וְאֶל־תִּבְכּוּ כִּי בּוֹכִים כָּל־הָעָם כְּשָׁמְעוּ אֶת־דְּבַר הַתּוֹרָה: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם לְכוּ אֲבִלוּ מִשְׁמַיִם וּשְׁתוּ מִמַּתְקִים וּשְׁלַחוּ מְנוֹחַ לְאִין נִבְּוֹן לוֹ כִּי־קִדְוֹשׁ הַיּוֹם לְאֲדִינֵנוּ וְאֶל־תַּעֲצְבוּ כִּי־חֲדַדְתִּי ה' הוּא מַעֲזֵכֶם: וְהַלְוִיִּים מִחֲשִׁים לְכָל־הָעָם לֵאמֹר הִסּוּ כִּי הַיּוֹם קִדְשׁ וְאֶל־תַּעֲצְבוּ: וַיִּלְכוּ כָּל־הָעָם לֵאכֹל וּלְשִׁתּוֹת וּלְשַׁלַּח מְנוֹחַת וּלְעַשׂוֹת שְׂמִיחָה גְדוֹלָה כִּי הִבִּינוּ בְּדַבְרֵים אֲשֶׁר הוֹדִיעוּ לָהֶם: וּבַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי נֶאֱסַפּוּ רְאִשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת לְכָל־הָעָם הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּים אֶל־עֹזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר וְלְהַשְׁכִּיל אֶל־דְּבַר הַתּוֹרָה: וַיִּמְצְאוּ כְּתוּב בְּתוֹרַה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁבוּ בְּבֵית־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּסֻכּוֹת בְּחַג בְּחֻדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי: וְאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמִיעוּ וַיַּעֲבִירוּ קוֹל בְּכָל־עִרְיָהֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַם לֵאמֹר צְאוּ הָרָר וְהִבְיֵאוּ עֲלֵי־יָדְיָתְיִם

וְעַל־עַץ שָׁמַן וְעַל־הַדָּס וְעַל־תְּמָרִים וְעַל־עֵץ עֲבֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת סִכָּת כַּכָּתוּב: וַיֵּצְאוּ הָעָם וַיָּבִיאוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם סִכּוֹת אִישׁ עַל־גֹּל וּבַחֲצֵרֵיהֶם וּבַחֲצֵרוֹת בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים וּבְרַחוּב שְׁעַר הַמַּיִם וּבְרַחוּב שְׁעַר אֶפְרָיִם: וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כָל־הַקְּהָל הַשְּׂבִיִּים מִן־הַשְּׂבִי סִכּוֹת וַיִּשְׁבּוּ בַסִּכּוֹת כִּי לֹא־עָשׂוּ מִימֵי יִשׁוּעַ בְּרַחוּב כֹּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד הַיּוֹם הַהוּא וַתְּהִי שִׁמְחָה גְדוֹלָה מְאֹד: וַיִּקְרָא בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים יוֹם בְּיוֹם מִן־הַיּוֹם הַרְאִישׁוֹן עַד הַיּוֹם הָאַחֲרֹן וַיַּעֲשׂוּ חֵלֶל שַׁבְּעַת יָמִים וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׂמִינִי עֲצָרַת כַּמִּשְׁפָּט:

The entire people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the scroll of the Teaching of Moses with which the LORD had charged Israel. On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest brought the Teaching before the congregation, men and women and all who could listen with understanding. He read from it, facing the square before the Water Gate, from the first light until midday, to the men and the women and those who could understand; the ears of all the people were given to the scroll of the Teaching. Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden tower made for the purpose, and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah at his right, and at his left Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, Meshullam. Ezra opened the scroll in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; as he opened it, all the people stood up. Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," with hands upraised. Then they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD with their faces to the ground. Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites explained the Teaching to the people, while the people stood in their places. They read from the scroll of the Teaching of God, translating it and giving the sense; so they understood the reading. Nehemiah the Tirshatha, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were explaining to the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God: you must not mourn or weep," for all the people were weeping as they listened to the words of the Teaching.

He further said to them, "Go, eat choice foods and drink sweet drinks and send portions to whoever has nothing prepared, for the day is holy to our Lord. Do not be sad, for your rejoicing in the LORD is the source of your strength." The Levites were quieting the people, saying, "Hush, for the day is holy; do not be sad." Then all the people went to eat and drink and send portions and make great merriment, for they understood the things they were told. On the second day, the heads of the clans of all the people and the priests and Levites gathered to Ezra the scribe to study the words of the Teaching. They found written in the Teaching that the LORD had commanded Moses that the Israelites must dwell in booths during the festival of the seventh month, and that they must announce and proclaim throughout all their towns and Jerusalem as follows, "Go out to the mountains and bring leafy branches of olive trees, pine trees, myrtles, palms and [other] leafy^a trees to make booths, as it is written." So the people went out and brought them, and made themselves booths on their roofs, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the House of God, in the square of the Water Gate and in the square of the Ephraim Gate. The whole community that returned from the captivity made booths and dwelt in the booths—the Israelites had not done so from the days of Joshua, son of Nun to that day—and there was very great rejoicing. He read from the scroll of the Teaching of God each day, from the first to the last day. They celebrated the festival seven days, and there was a solemn gathering on the eighth, as prescribed.



[1.] Letter of Šidqi **to the temple administrator and the temple scribe**, his lords. Daily, I pray to Bēl and Nabû for the prosperity and long life of my lords...

[2.] Letter of Bēl-uballiṭ **to the temple administrator and the temple scribe**, the lords. Daily, I pray to Bēl, Nabû, the Lady-of-Uruk and Nanāya for the prosperity of the lords.... The *protesters carried* [sti]cks; there were Piqūdeans and Sealanders among them. I told them, “Go to the temple administrator and to the temple scribe.”

[3.] I have heard that Nabû-aḥḥē-iddin is going to Uruk. Send (me) quickly five minas of silver for iron *qappatu*-tools. By Bēl and Nabû, **the temple administrator, the temple scribe**, and all of the Eanna (personnel) all have deserted their posts, and you (in) Eanna are saying “Many provisions (are needed) for the workers for (their journey) to Uruk and one shekel of silver for the slaves”; I withheld (this) from them.

[4.] **Now, talk with the temple administrator and the temple scribe**; they should give ten minas of silver for the work, the bitumen, and barley **to two scribes**, and come here (with it) to use it for the work and the bitumen. We are working threefold; we do (everything) on top of the work of last year and two years ago. **Why is it that (when) the temple administrator writes to you from here you send him silver, but (when) I write, you don’t send silver?**