

against the inhabitants of Yehudah and Yerushalayim.

[7] Then, in the days of Artachshasta [*Artaxerxes I 465-424 B.C.E.*], it was Bishlam, Mitredat, Tavel, and the rest of their companions, who wrote unto Artachshasta Melech Paras (Persia); and the writing of the letter was written in Aramaic script, and set forth in Aramaic.

[8] Rechum the high commissioner and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Yerushalayim to Melech Artachshasta as follows;

[9] Then wrote Rechum the high commissioner, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the judges, the officials, the Tarplim, the Apharsim, the Arkvim, the Babylonians, and those of Shushan, that is, the Elma'im,

[10] And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnapar deported, and settled in the city of Shomron (*Samaria*), and elsewhere in Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*] wrote; and now

[11] This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artachshasta HaMelech; From thy avadim, the men Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*]; and now

[12] May it be known unto the Melech, that the Yehudim which came up from thee to us are come unto Yerushalayim, building the rebellious and the wicked city, and finishing its walls, and repairing the foundations.

[13] Be it known now unto the Melech, that, if this city be built, and the walls set up again, then they will not pay tax, tribute, or duty, and so thou shalt damage the royal revenues.

[14] Now because we have covenant maintenance ("share the King's salt") from the palace, and it was not proper for us to see the dishonor of the Melech, therefore we have sent and informed the Melech

[15] That search may be made in the sefer of the archives of thy avot; so shalt thou find in the sefer of the archives, and know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto melachim and provinces, a place of sedition from ancient times, for which cause was this city destroyed.

[16] We inform the Melech that, if this city be built again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no possession in the province Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*].

[17] Then the Melech sent an answer: Unto Rechum the high commissioner, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their companions that dwell in Shomron

(*Samaria*), and unto the rest Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], Shalom, and now

[18] The nish'tevan (official document) which ye sent unto us hath been fully read before me;

[19] And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city for a long time hath made insurrection against melachim, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein.

[20] There have been mighty melachim also over Yerushalayim, which have ruled over all territory Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], to whom tax, tribute, and duty were paid.

[21] Give ye now ta'am (command) to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not built, until another ta'am shall be given from me.

[22] Take heed now that ye fail not to do this; lamah (why) should damage grow to the hurt of the Melech?

[23] Now when the copy of letter of Melech Artachshasta was read before Rechum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Yerushalayim unto the Yehudim, and made them to cease by force and compulsion.

[24] Then ceased the work of the Beis HaElohim which is at Yerushalayim. So it ceased unto the second year [*i.e., 520 B.C.E.*] of the reign of Daryavesh (Darius) Melech Paras (Persia).

5 Then the nevi'im, Chaggai HaNavi, and Zecharyah ben Iddo, prophesied unto the Yehudim that were in Yehudah and Yerushalayim in the shem Elohei Yisroel, Who was [*in authority*] over them.

[2] Then rose up Zerubavel ben Sh'altiel, and Yeshua ben Yotzadak, and began to build the Beis Elohim which is at Yerushalayim; and with them were the nevi'im of Elohim helping them.

[3] At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor of the province Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], and Shetar-Boznai and their companions, and said thus unto them, Who hath authorized you to build this Beis [*Hamikdash*], and to finish this structure?

[4] Then said we unto them accordinging what were the shmot of the men that are constructing this building.

[5] But the Ayn Eloheihem (Eye of their G-d) was upon the leaders of the Yehudim, that they could not cause them to cease, until the matter came to Daryavesh (Darius); and