

then answer was returned by letter concerning this matter.

|6| The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor of the province Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], and Shetar-Boznai and his companions the envoys which were in the province Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], sent unto Daryavesh (Darius) the Melech [see 6:6];

|7| They sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus: Unto Daryavesh HaMelech, all Shalom.

|8| Be it known unto the Melech, that we went into the province of Yehudah, to the Beis of the great Elohim, which is being built with great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.

|9| Then asked we those leaders, and said unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this Beis [*Hamikdash*], and to restore this structure?

|10| We asked their shmot also, to inform thee, that we might write down the shmot of the men that were their heads for thy information.

|11| And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the avadim of the Elohei Shomayim vAretz, and build the Beis that was built these many years ago, which a great Melech Yisroel built and set up.

|12| But because Avoteinu had provoked the Elohei Shomayim unto them into the hand of Nevuchadnetzar Melech Bavel, the Kasdai (Chaldean), who destroyed this Beis, and carried the people away into the Golus of Bavel (Babylon).

|13| But in the first year of Koresh (Cyrus) Melech Bavel the same Melech Koresh made a decree to build this Beis Elohim.

|14| And the vessels also of zahav and kesef of the Beis Elohim, which Nevuchadnetzar took out of the Heikhal that was in Yerushalayim, and brought into the Heikhal of Babylon, those did Koresh the Melech take out of the Heikhal of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose shem was Sheshbatzar, whom he had made governor;

|15| And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, deposit them into the Heikhal that is in Yerushalayim, and let the Beis Elohim be built in its place.

|16| Then came the same Sheshbatzar, and laid the foundation of the Beis Elohim which is in Yerushalayim; and since that time even until now hath it been under construction, and yet it is not finished.

|17| Now therefore, if it seem good to the Melech, let there be search made in the bais of royal archives, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Koresh (Cyrus) the Melech to build this Beis Elohim at Yerushalayim, and let the Melech send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

6 Then Daryavesh (Darius) the Melech made a decree, and search was made in the bais of the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon.

|2| And there was found at Achmeta, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a megillah, and therein was a record thus written;

|3| In the first year of Koresh the Melech, Koresh the Melech made a decree concerning the Beis Elohim at Yerushalayim, Let the Beis [*Hamikdash*] be built, the place where they offered

sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits;

|4| With three courses of great stones, and a course of new timber; and let the expenses be given out of the Melech's treasury;

|5| And also let the vessels of zahav and kesef of the Beis Elohim, which Nevuchadnetzar took forth out of the Heikhal which is at Yerushalayim, and brought unto Babylon, be returned, and brought again unto the Heikhal which is at Yerushalayim, every one to its place, and deposit them in the Beis Elohim.

|6| Now therefore, Tatnai, governor Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], Shetar-Boznai, and your companions the envoys, which were in the province Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], you stay far from there!

|7| Let the work of this Beis Elohim alone; let the governor of the Yehudim and the leaders of the Yehudim build this Beis Elohim in its place.

|8| Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the leaders of these Yehudim for the building of this Beis Elohim; that of the royal treasuries, even of the revenue of the province Beyond-the-River [*Euphrates*], forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered.

|9| And that which they have need of, both young bulls, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the Elohei Shomayim, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the request of the kohanim which are at Yerushalayim, let it be given them day by day