

¹وَلَمَّا سَمِعَ أَعْدَاءُ يَهُودَا وَبَنِيَامِينَ أَنَّ بَنِي السَّنِي يَبْنُونَ هَيْكَلًا لِلرَّبِّ إِلَهَ إِسْرَائِيلَ،²تَقَدَّمُوا إِلَى زَرْبَابِيلَ وَرُؤُوسِ الْآبَاءِ وَقَالُوا لَهُمْ، تَبْنِي مَعَكُمْ لَأَنَّا نَطِيرُكُمْ تَطْلُبُ إِلَهُكُمْ، وَلَهُ قَدْ دَبَخْنَا مِنْ أَيَّامِ أَسْرَحَدُونَ مَلِكِ أَشُورَ الَّذِي أَصْعَدَنَا إِلَى هُنَا.³فَقَالَ لَهُمْ زَرْبَابِيلُ وَيَشُوعُ وَبَقِيَّةُ رُؤُوسِ آبَاءِ إِسْرَائِيلَ، لَيْسَ لَكُمْ وَلَنَا أَنْ تَبْنِيَ بَيْتًا لِإِلَهَتَا، وَلَكِنَّا نَحْنُ وَخَدَتَا تَبْنِي لِلرَّبِّ إِلَهِ إِسْرَائِيلَ كَمَا أَمَرَتَا الْمَلِكُ كُورْشُ مَلِكِ فَارْسَ. وَكَانَ شَعْبُ الْأَرْضِ يُرْخُونَ أَيْدِي شَعْبِ يَهُودَا وَيُدْعِرُونَهُمْ عَنِ الْبَيْتِ.⁵وَأَسْتَاجَرُوا صِدَّهُمْ مُشِيرِينَ لِيُطِيلُوا مَسُورَتَهُمْ كُلَّ أَيَّامِ كُورْشَ مَلِكِ فَارْسَ وَحَتَّى مَلِكِ دَارْيُوسَ مَلِكِ فَارْسَ. وَفِي مَلِكِ أَحْسُوَرْوَشَ فِي أَيَّامِ مُلْكِهِ كَتَبُوا شَكْوَى عَلَى سُكَّانِ يَهُودَا وَأَوْرُشَلِيمَ.⁷وَفِي أَيَّامِ أَرْتَحْشَسْتَا كَتَبَ بِشْلَامُ وَمِثْرَدَاثُ وَطَلْبَيْلُ وَسَائِرُ رُقَقَائِهِمْ إِلَى أَرْتَحْشَسْتَا مَلِكِ فَارْسَ. وَكُتِبَتِ الرِّسَالَةُ مَكْتُوبَةً بِالْأَرَامِيَّةِ وَمُتَرْجَمَةٌ بِالْأَرَامِيَّةِ.⁸رَجُومُ صَاحِبِ الْقَصَاءِ وَشِمَشَائُ الْكَاتِبُ كَتَبَا رِسَالَةً صِدَّ أَوْرُشَلِيمَ إِلَى أَرْتَحْشَسْتَا الْمَلِكِ هَكَذَا،⁹كَتَبَ جَبْتَيْزُ رَجُومُ صَاحِبِ الْقَصَاءِ وَشِمَشَائُ الْكَاتِبُ وَسَائِرُ رُقَقَائِهِمَا الدِّيَّيْنِ وَالْأَفْرِسْتِيَّيْنِ وَالطَّرْفَلِيِّيْنِ وَالْأَفْرِسِيِّيْنِ وَالْأَرْكُوبِيِّيْنِ وَالْبَابَلِيِّيْنِ وَالشُّوشِيَّيْنِ وَالْدَّهَوِيِّيْنِ وَالْعِيلَامِيِّيْنِ¹⁰وَسَائِرِ الْأُمَمِ الَّذِينَ سَبَّاهُمْ أَسْفَرُ الْعَظِيمِ السَّرِيفُ وَأَسَكَّتَهُمْ مُدُنُ السَّامِرَةِ وَسَائِرِ الَّذِينَ فِي غَيْرِ النَّهْرِ وَإِلَى آخِرِهِ.¹¹هَذِهِ صُورَةُ الرِّسَالَةِ الَّتِي أُرْسِلَتْهَا إِلَيْهِ إِلَى أَرْتَحْشَسْتَا الْمَلِكِ، لِيُعْلِمَ الْمَلِكُ أَنَّ الْيَهُودَ الَّذِينَ ضَعَدُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ إِلَيْنَا قَدْ أَتَوْا إِلَى أَوْرُشَلِيمَ وَيَبْنُونَ الْمَدِينَةَ الْعَاصِيَةَ الرَّدِيئَةَ، وَقَدْ أَكْمَلُوا أَسْوَازَهَا وَرَمَّمُوا أُسُسَهَا.¹³لِيَكُنِ الْآنَ مَعْلُومًا لَدَى الْمَلِكِ أَنَّهُ إِذَا بُنِيَ هَذِهِ الْمَدِينَةُ وَأَكْمِلَتْ أَسْوَازُهَا لَا يَبُودُونَ جَزِيَّةً وَلَا خَرَجًا وَلَا خِفَارَةً، فَأَخِيرًا تُضَرُّ الْمُلُوكُ.¹⁴وَالآنَ بِمَا إِنَّا نَأْكُلُ مِلْحَ دَارِ الْمَلِكِ، وَلَا يَلِيقُ بِنَا أَنْ تَرَى صَرَرَ الْمَلِكِ، لِذَلِكَ أُرْسَلْنَا فَأَعْلَمْنَا الْمَلِكَ¹⁵لِيَقْتَسَ فِي سِفْرِ أَخْبَارِ آبَائِكَ، فَتَجِدَ فِي سِفْرِ الْأَخْبَارِ وَتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ هَذِهِ الْمَدِينَةَ مَدِينَةُ عَاصِيَةٍ وَمُضِرَّةٌ لِلْمُلُوكِ وَالْبِلَادِ، وَقَدْ عَمِلُوا عَصْيَانًا فِي وَسْطِهَا مِنْذُ الْيَوْمِ الْقَدِيمِ، لِذَلِكَ أُخْرِبَتْ هَذِهِ الْمَدِينَةُ.¹⁶وَنَحْنُ نَعْلَمُ الْمَلِكُ أَنَّهُ إِذَا بُنِيَ هَذِهِ الْمَدِينَةُ وَأَكْمِلَتْ أَسْوَازُهَا لَا يَكُونُ لَكَ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ نَصِيبٌ فِي غَيْرِ النَّهْرِ.¹⁷فَأَرْسَلَ الْمَلِكُ جَوَابًا، إِلَى رَجُومِ صَاحِبِ الْقَصَاءِ وَشِمَشَائِ الْكَاتِبِ وَسَائِرِ رُقَقَائِهِمَا السَّاكِنِينَ فِي السَّامِرَةِ وَبَاقِي الَّذِينَ فِي غَيْرِ النَّهْرِ.

¹Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel;²Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do ; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.³But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.⁴Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,⁵And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.⁶And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue.⁸Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort:⁹Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the

سَلَامٌ إِلَى آخِرِهِ. ¹⁸الرَّسَالَةُ الَّتِي أَرْسَلْنَاهَا إِلَيْنَا قَدْ
 فُرِثَتْ بِوُضُوحٍ أَمَامِي. ¹⁹وَقَدْ خَرَجَ مِنْ عِنْدِي أَمْرٌ قَفَّسُوا
 وَوُجِدَ أَنَّ هَذِهِ الْمَدِينَةَ مِنْذُ الْأَيَّامِ الْقَدِيمَةِ تَقُومُ عَلَى
 الْمُلُوكِ وَقَدْ جَرَى فِيهَا تَمَرُّدٌ وَعَصْيَانٌ. ²⁰وَقَدْ كَانَ مُلُوكُ
 مُقَدَّرُونَ عَلَى أُورُشَلِيمَ وَتَسَلَّطُوا عَلَى جَمِيعِ غَيْرِ النَّهْرِ
 وَقَدْ أُعْطُوا جِزْيَةً وَخَرَجًا وَخِفَارَةً. ²¹فَالآنَ أَخْرَجُوا أَمْرًا
 يَتَوَقَّفُ أُولَئِكَ الرِّجَالِ فَلَا يُبْنَى هَذِهِ الْمَدِينَةُ حَتَّى يَصْدُرَ
 مِنِّي أَمْرٌ. ²²فَاخْذَرُوا مِنْ أَنْ تَتَهَاوَنُوا عَنْ عَمَلِ ذَلِكَ.
 لِمَاذَا يَكْثُرُ الصَّرَرُ لِحَسَارَةِ الْمُلُوكِ.. ²³جِيئْ لِمَا فُرِثَتْ
 رِسَالَةُ أَرْحَشَسْتَا الْمَلِكِ أَمَامَ رَجُومٍ وَشِمَشَايِ الْكَاتِبِ
 وَرَفَقَائِهِمَا دَهَبُوا بِسُرْعَةٍ إِلَى أُورُشَلِيمَ إِلَى الْيَهُودِ
 وَأَوْقَفُوهُمْ بِزِرَاعٍ وَقُوَّةٍ. ²⁴جِيئْ تَوَقَّفَ عَمَلُ بَيْتِ اللَّهِ
 الَّذِي فِي أُورُشَلِيمَ وَكَانَ مُتَوَقِّعًا إِلَى السَّنَةِ الثَّانِيَةِ مِنْ
 مُلِكِ دَارْيُوسَ مَلِكِ قَارِسَ.

Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, ¹⁰And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnappar brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river, and at such a time. ¹¹This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time. ¹²Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations. ¹³Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings. ¹⁴Now because we have maintenance from the king's palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we sent and certified the king; ¹⁵That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time: for which cause was this city destroyed. ¹⁶We certify the king that, if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river. ¹⁷Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their companions that dwell in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the river, Peace,

and at such a time.¹⁸ The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me.¹⁹ And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein.²⁰ There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.²¹ Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me.²² Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?²³ Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power.²⁴ Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.