

Ezra 1:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.

Analysis

And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. This verse describes implementation of Cyrus's provision. The phrase 'strengthened their hands' (chizqu bideihem) is an idiom meaning to provide support and encouragement, both material and moral.

The comprehensive list—vessels, silver, gold, goods, beasts, precious things—indicates substantial wealth transferred. This wasn't token assistance but significant material foundation. The repetition emphasizes abundance and thoroughness. God ensured His people left exile enriched, echoing the exodus pattern.

The phrase 'beside all that was willingly offered' distinguishes between obligatory support and voluntary additional giving. This suggests enthusiastic response exceeding requirements, demonstrating genuine excitement about temple restoration. Voluntary offerings indicate that many who couldn't return still wanted to invest through giving.

Historical Context

The transfer of wealth from Babylonian Jews to Palestinian returnees created economic foundation. Without such resources, returnees would have arrived

destitute in devastated land with no means to rebuild. This provision demonstrated both divine blessing and human generosity working together.

Archaeological evidence suggests many Babylonian Jews achieved significant economic success during exile. Business documents from Murashu archives show Jews engaged in banking, trade, and agriculture. Some had become wealthy and influential. Their willingness to support the return financially showed maintained commitment to covenant identity.

The pattern of wealthy diaspora communities supporting the homeland established precedent continuing through Jewish history. This model influenced later Christian practice of churches supporting missionary ventures.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the partnership between those who went and gave challenge individualistic approaches to calling?
2. What principles for stewardship emerge from the combination of required support and voluntary giving?
3. How can believers 'strengthen the hands' of those in difficult ministry today?

Interlinear Text

וְכָל	סְבִיבֵיתֵיהֶם	חֲזַק וְ	בְיָדֵיהֶם	בְּכֵלֵי	
H3605	And all they that were about	them strengthened	their hands	with vessels	
	H5439	H2388	H3027	H3627	
כֶּסֶף	בַּזָּהָב	בְּרִכְוֹשׁ	וּבְבֵהֶם	וּבַמְגִדֹת	לִבְדָּ
of silver	with gold	with goods	and with beasts	and with precious things	H905
H3701	H2091	H7399	H929	H4030	
עַל	כָּל	הַתְּנִדָּב:			
H5921	H3605	beside all that was willingly offered			
		H5068			

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