

Ezra 1:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods;

Analysis

Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods. This verse marks the restoration of sacred vessels taken when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:13, 25:13-17). These vessels represented not merely valuable artifacts but sacred implements dedicated to Yahweh's service. Their placement in Babylonian temples symbolized the defeat of Israel's God and vindication of Babylon's deities.

Cyrus's act of returning the vessels reverses this theological insult. The restoration demonstrates that Yahweh had not been defeated—He had used Babylon as His instrument of judgment and now commanded Persia to restore His people and worship implements. This teaches that God's apparent absence or defeat in history is often His mysterious working toward ultimate purposes.

The careful preservation of these vessels for seventy years shows divine providence. In Babylonian culture, captured temple vessels were typically melted down for bullion or destroyed. Their survival intact testifies to God's sovereign protection even of inanimate objects connected to His worship. The return of these specific vessels provided tangible continuity between pre-exilic and post-exilic worship.

Historical Context

Ancient warfare commonly involved seizing enemy temples' sacred objects as proof of military and theological victory. The conquering nation's gods were deemed superior to the defeated nation's deities. Nebuchadnezzar's seizure of Jerusalem's temple vessels thus made a religious statement as much as a political one.

The biblical record carefully documents these vessels' journey: taken by Nebuchadnezzar, placed in Babylon's temples (Daniel 1:2), later profaned by Belshazzar in his feast (Daniel 5:2-4), and now restored by Cyrus. This tracking demonstrates their significance to Jewish identity and worship continuity. Some vessels dated to Solomon's original temple, making them nearly 400 years old.

Cyrus's return of temple vessels aligned with his broader policy documented in the Cyrus Cylinder, which describes returning cult statues and sacred objects to their original sanctuaries throughout his empire. This policy won loyalty from subject peoples who viewed him as divinely favored.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does the preservation and restoration of temple vessels teach about God's faithfulness to seemingly small details of worship?
2. How should modern believers balance honoring historical traditions with avoiding idolatry of religious objects or practices?
3. What encouragement does this verse offer regarding things in our lives that seem profaned or lost beyond recovery?

Interlinear Text

וְהָמָּ לֶךְ	כּ וְכֹשׁ	הוֹצִיא	אֶת	כָּל י	בְּיֵת	יְהוָה
the king	Also Cyrus	brought forth	H853	the vessels	of the house	of the LORD
H4428	H3566	H3318		H3627	H1004	H3068
אֲשֶׁר	הוֹצִיא	נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	מִיר וְשָׁלַם	וְנָתַן		
H834	brought forth	which Nebuchadnezzar	out of Jerusalem	and had put		
	H3318	H5019	H3389	H5414		
בְּיֵת	אֱלֹהָיו:					
of the house	of his gods					
H1004	H430					

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 24:13 (Kingdom): And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.

2 Chronicles 36:7 (References Lord): Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.

Ezra 5:14 (Kingdom): And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor;

Ezra 6:5 (References God): And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.

2 Chronicles 36:10 (Kingdom): And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.

