

Ezra 5:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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;

Analysis

The return of temple vessels provided tangible proof of Cyrus's decree. These vessels—sacred implements Nebuchadnezzar had plundered and placed in Babylonian temples (Daniel 1:2; 5:2-3)—symbolized Israel's humiliation. Their restoration reversed that shame. The movement from "temple of Babylon" to "temple that was in Jerusalem" illustrated God's sovereignty over sacred objects and human empires.

Sheshbazzar's appointment as governor (pechah) gave the restoration official Persian sanction. His Babylonian name (possibly meaning "Shamash protect the father") masked his Davidic lineage as Zerubbabel's predecessor or possibly an alternative name. The vessels' transfer through proper administrative channels—from Persian treasury to appointed governor—established unassailable legal precedent.

Historical Context

Sheshbazzar appears only here and in Ezra 1:8-11 as the initial leader of the return. His relationship to Zerubbabel remains debated: some identify them as the

same person (Babylonian vs. Hebrew names), while others see Sheshbazzar as an older relative who died early, with Zerubbabel assuming leadership. The title "governor" indicates Persian-appointed authority over the Judean province, making temple reconstruction an official imperial project.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the return of the temple vessels symbolize complete restoration after judgment, and what does this teach about God's thoroughness in redemption?
2. Why was establishing proper administrative authorization important for the long-term success of the restoration project?

Interlinear Text

וְיָמֵן מִן הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תִּקְרַב נְבֻכְדָּנָצָר

בְּנֵי לְבָבָל תִּקְרַבְתָּ וְיִבְרַא לְמִזְבֵּחַ בְּרִירָא שֶׁבְּרִירָה מִזְבֵּחַ

take of Babylon of the temple those and brought that was in Jerusalem

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בָּבָלָן	דָּי	פִּיכְלָא	מֶן	מֶלֶךְ אָ	כָּוֶרֶשׁ	הַמָּוֶה
those	did Cyrus	the king	out of	the temple	of	of Babylon

פָּתָח הַדִּין שֶׁמֶן לְשֵׁשְׁבָּזָר וְיָהִי יְבוֹא
 and they were delivered was Sheshbazzar unto one whose name of governor
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שמעה:

whom he had made

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Additional Cross-References

Ezra 6:5 (Temple): 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.

Jeremiah 52:19 (Parallel theme): And the basons, and the firepans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the cups; that which was of gold in gold, and that which was of silver in silver, took the captain of the guard away.

Ezra 5:16 (References God): Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished.

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