

Ezra 5:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace.

Analysis

The letter's salutation "Unto Darius the king, all peace" employs the Aramaic greeting *shelama kolla* (complete peace). This formal diplomatic opening expressed loyalty and proper respect for royal authority. The greeting mirrors formulas found in other ancient Near Eastern correspondence and establishes the letter's official nature.

The brief salutation contrasts with the detailed report that follows, demonstrating professional efficiency in imperial communication. Persian administration valued concise, factual reporting. The respectful tone indicates Tatnai was not necessarily hostile to the Jews but dutifully fulfilling his administrative obligations.

Historical Context

The Aramaic formula "all peace" appears in other Persian-period documents, including the Elephantine papyri from Egypt and various administrative texts. Standard diplomatic protocol required such greetings to acknowledge royal authority. The letter format—sender identification, greeting, report body, and concluding request—follows consistent patterns found throughout the Persian Empire's extensive bureaucratic correspondence.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How should Christians balance showing proper respect to earthly authorities while maintaining ultimate allegiance to God?
2. What does the professional, factual nature of this correspondence teach about maintaining integrity in difficult situations?

Interlinear Text

לְדָרְךָ וְשׁ	בְּגִוּהָ	כֶּתִיב	וְכִדְנָה	עַל וְהִי	שָׁלְחוּ	פְּתִיגָהּ אֵ
Unto Darius	him wherein	was written	thus	unto	They sent	a letter
H1868	H1459	H3790	H1836	H5922	H7972	H6600
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כָּלֵא:	שְׁלָמָהּ אֵ	מֶלֶךְ אֵ				
all	peace	the king				
H3606	H8001	H4430				

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