

Ezra 6:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

Analysis

The purpose for provision—'that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons'—reveals Darius's motivation. He sought divine blessing through support of proper worship. Whether this reflects genuine belief or pragmatic insurance, God uses it for His purposes. The text doesn't require pagan rulers' pure motives—God accomplishes His will even through mixed motivations and self-interest.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern belief held that gods blessed kingdoms that honored them and cursed those who neglected their worship. Darius's concern for securing divine blessing through Jewish prayers was common royal theology. Similar concepts appear in Persian inscriptions invoking various deities' favor. Pragmatic or not, this belief provided incentive for religious tolerance and material support that benefited God's people.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God use even imperfect or self-interested human motivations to accomplish His redemptive purposes?
2. What does Darius's concern about divine blessing teach about general revelation and human awareness of divine power?

Interlinear Text

דִּי H1768	לְהוֹדוֹת H1934	מִמִּקְרָב יָן H7127	נִיחוּחַ יָן H5208	לְאֵל הָ H426
That they may offer		sacrifices of sweet savours		unto the God
of heaven H8065	and pray H6739	for the life H2417	of the king H4430	and of his sons H1123

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 29:7 (Prayer): And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

Ezra 7:23 (Kingdom): Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?