

Ezra 6:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits;

Analysis

The quotation preserves Cyrus's specific authorization: 'let the house be builded... the place where they offered sacrifices.' This validates that temple rebuilding had imperial authorization from the beginning. The specifications for 'height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits' provided formal parameters. Cyrus's decree distinguished legitimate worship (temple) from rebellion (fortifications), addressing Persian security concerns while enabling Jewish religious life.

Historical Context

Sixty cubits equals approximately 90 feet—substantial structure though smaller than Solomon's temple. The measurements provided official parameters preventing unauthorized expansion that could serve military purposes. Ancient rulers commonly supported religious institutions while monitoring potential rebellion. Cyrus's specific mention of sacrifice location (altar) shows detailed knowledge of Jewish worship, possibly reflecting Daniel's influence at court.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does governmental provision of specific parameters for worship demonstrate both religious liberty and legitimate state interest in order?
2. What does Cyrus's distinction between temple (authorized) and fortifications (unauthorized) teach about different spheres of authority?

Interlinear Text

בשָׁנָה תְּ	שָׁמֵן	מֶלֶךְ	מֶלֶךְ	שָׁמֵן	טָעֵם
year	In the first	of Cyrus	the king	of Cyrus	made
H8140	H2298	H3567	H4430	H3567	H7761
אֶלְךָ אַתָּה בְּיַהֲוֵל	בְּיַהֲוֵל אֶלְךָ אַתָּה				
Let the house	of God	at Jerusalem	Let the house	be builded	the place
H1005	H426	H3390	H1005	H1124	H870
מִסְׁבֵּל יְהָוֵה	וְאַשׁ וְהִ	דְּבַת יְהָוֵה	וְאַשׁ וְהִ	מִסְׁבֵּל יְהָוֵה	וְאַשׁ וְהִ
where they offered	sacrifices	and let the foundations	thereof be strongly laid		
H1684	H1685	H787	H5446		
רֹמָה אֶמְלָה שְׁתִּין:	אֶמְלָה שְׁתִּין:	פְּתִין הַ	אֶמְלָה שְׁתִּין:	רֹמָה אֶמְלָה	שְׁתִּין:
the height	cubits	thereof threescore	and the breadth	cubits	thereof threescore
H7314	H521	H8361	H6613	H521	H8361

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 21:16 (Parallel theme): And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

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