

Ezra 6:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered.

Analysis

Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. This verse records Darius's decree using the Aramaic term *te'em* (ܬܝܥܡ, 'decree'), carrying legal force throughout the Persian Empire. The phrase 'of the king's goods' refers to imperial treasury, showing unprecedented royal support for rebuilding God's house.

The critical phrase **that they be not hindered** uses the Aramaic *batel* (ܠܬܝܬܠܝܬ), meaning 'to cease' or 'be made ineffective.' Darius commands that nothing obstruct the work—an ironic reversal since earlier Persian officials had tried to stop construction (Ezra 4:23). God orchestrates circumstances so opposition becomes support. The specification of 'tribute beyond the river' (revenue from the Trans-Euphrates province) means local opposition would fund what they opposed.

Theologically, this demonstrates God's sovereignty over national treasuries. When God purposes to build His house, He moves kings to finance it. The command 'forthwith' (Aramaic *osparna*, 'diligently/immediately') shows urgency, reversing previous delay.

Historical Context

Darius I (522-486 BC) inherited Cyrus's tolerant religious policies. Archaeological discoveries, including the Behistun Inscription, confirm his administrative efficiency and concern for legal continuity. He sought to verify Cyrus's original decree (Ezra 6:1-5), establishing legal precedent for supporting temple construction.

The 'tribute beyond the river' referred to taxes collected from the satrapy west of the Euphrates, encompassing Syria-Palestine. Persian administrative documents show this region generated substantial revenue, making Darius's decree financially significant. Forcing regional taxes to fund Jewish temple construction reversed the power dynamic.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's ability to turn opposition into support encourage perseverance in ministry despite resistance?
2. What does Darius's decree teach about the role of civil government in protecting religious liberty?
3. How should believers respond when God provides resources through unexpected or even hostile sources?

Interlinear Text

וּמִנִּי	שֶׁ יֵשׁ	טֵעַם	לָמָּה אֶ	דִּי	תַּעֲבֹד וְ	עִם	שָׁבִי י
Moreover	I make	a decree	what	even of	ye shall do	to	the elders
H4481	H7761	H2942	H3964	H1768	H5648	H5974	H7868
יְהוּדִיָּא	אֵלָּהּ	לְמִבְנֵי א	בֵּית	אֱלֹהֵי א	דֵּן	וּמִנְכֶּם י	
Jews	of these	for the building	house	of God	of this	goods	
H3062	H479	H1124	H1005	H426	H1791	H5232	
מֶלֶךְ א	דִּי	מִדַּת	עֲבֹר ר	נָהָר ה	אֲסַפְּ רָנָא	נִפְקֹת א	
that of the king's	even of	the tribute	beyond	the river	forthwith	expenses	
H4430	H1768	H4061	H5675	H5103	H629	H5313	
אֶהְיֶה א	מְתִיחָהּ א	לְגִבּוֹרֵי א	אֵלָּהּ	דִּי	לֹא א	לְבִטּוּלָא:	
be	given	men	of these	even of	that they be not	hindered	
H1934	H3052	H1400	H479	H1768	H3809	H989	

Additional Cross-References

Ezra 6:4 (Kingdom): With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house:

Haggai 2:8 (Parallel theme): The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.