

Ezra 7:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel.

Analysis

The description 'this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe'—combines priestly and scribal identities. As priest, Ezra could offer sacrifices; as scribe, he could teach Torah. The following letter (vv. 12-26) in Aramaic shows official administrative language, enhancing historical credibility. Royal authorization gave Ezra both resources and authority for his teaching mission. God provided not just permission but comprehensive support.

Historical Context

The letter's preservation in Aramaic (official Persian language) suggests quotation from official documents. Artaxerxes' support of Ezra may have reflected political calculation—stable, well-governed provinces benefited the empire. Jewish advisors like Nehemiah (later cupbearer, Nehemiah 2:1) may have influenced royal policy. The combination of priestly and scribal offices enabled comprehensive ministry—liturgical leadership and educational authority.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Ezra's dual role as priest and scribe demonstrate integration of worship and teaching rather than their separation?
2. What does royal authorization teach about God's provision of both spiritual calling and practical resources for ministry?

Interlinear Text

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|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| וְהָא | כִּפְשׁ גֵּן | הַנִּשְׁתֵּן | אֲשֶׁר | נָתַן | הֵם לָרֶ | |
| H2088 | Now this is the copy | of the letter | H834 | gave | that the king | |
| | H6572 | H5406 | | H5414 | H4428 | |
| אַרְתַּחְשָׁשׁ סָתָא | לְעֶזְרָא | הַכֹּהֵן | סֹפֵר | סֹפֵר | דִּבְרֵי | |
| Artaxerxes | unto Ezra | the priest | even a scribe | even a scribe | of the words | |
| H783 | H5830 | H3548 | H5608 | H5608 | H1697 | |
| מִצְוֹת | יְהוָה | וּמִקְצֵי | עַל | יִשְׂרָאֵל: | | |
| of the commandments | of the LORD | and of his statutes | H5921 | to Israel | | |
| H4687 | H3068 | H2706 | | H3478 | | |

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