

Ezra 8:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, even the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered:

Analysis

And weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels—**וְאָשַׁקְלָה**—(va'eshqelah, and I weighed) indicates precise measurement. The **שָׁקַל** (shaqal, to weigh) was standard commercial practice ensuring accountability—exact weights recorded at transfer prevented later disputes about missing items. The **כְּסֵף וְחַזָּהָב וְחֲקָלִים** (kessef v'hazahav v'hakelim, the silver and the gold and the vessels) comprised both raw precious metals and crafted liturgical implements.

Even the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered—**תְּרֻמָּת**—(terumat, the offering/contribution) designates these treasures as **קָדֵש** (holy) from the moment of dedication. The donors span the spectrum: **הַמֶּלֶךְ** (hamelekh, the king—Artaxerxes), **יוֹצָאֵב** (yo'atzav, his counselors), **שָׁרָב** (sarav, his princes), and **כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל** (kol-Yisrael, all Israel present—the Babylonian Jewish community). This unprecedented collaboration between pagan monarchy and diaspora community funded temple worship, demonstrating God's sovereign orchestration of history.

Historical Context

Persian kings followed Cyrus's policy of supporting subject peoples' religions to maintain loyalty (Cyrus Cylinder documents this strategy). Artaxerxes'

contributions (7:15-16) plus voluntary Jewish donations created enormous wealth transfer from Babylon to Jerusalem. The careful weighing and documentation parallels ancient Near Eastern commercial contracts (evidenced in thousands of cuneiform tablets) where witnesses verified transactions. Ezra's meticulous record-keeping (noting exact weights in vv. 26-27) provided legal protection and theological testimony to God's provision.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does the collaboration between pagan king and Jewish community teach about God's sovereignty over secular powers?
2. How does the careful weighing and documentation model accountability in handling sacred resources?
3. In what ways should modern ministry leaders balance faith-risk (refusing military escort) with careful stewardship (precise accounting)?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶשְׁקֹול הַזֶּה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ אֶת הַזָּהָב וְאֶת הַזָּהָר
And weighed the gold and the silver unto them the silver and the gold

בְּכָל יְמֵינוֹ יְהוָה יְהוָה תְּרֻומָת הַבָּיִת
and the vessels even the offering of the house of our God had offered

בְּנִמְצָאים: וְשָׁבָא לְכָל וְשָׁבָא לְכָל וְשָׁבָא לְכָל
which the king and his counsellors and his lords and all Israel there present

Additional Cross-References

Ezra 8:33 (References God): Now on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest; and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them was Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites;

Ezra 1:8 (Kingdom): Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.

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