



Expect Opposition

January 23, 2011

Ezra 4

¹ When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel, ² they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.”

³ But Zerubbabel, Joshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, “You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us.”

⁴ Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building.

⁵ They bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia.

²⁴ Thus the work on the house of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Discussion Questions

When was something going so well that it made you think that something bad was going to happen soon?

Why do you think the people of the land offer to help build the temple?

What do you know or remember about these people? (2 Kings 17)

Why do you think the Jews refused the help?

Were they right to do so?

Why do the Samaritans respond as they do?

Why does God allow this bad stuff to happen if they made the right choice?

What does this story tell us about how we interact with others?

How can our story be different from this story in Ezra?

Why can it be different?