

## Discouraged by the opposition

### Ezra 4

- I. Understanding the tactics of our spiritual enemies (Ezra 4:1-23)
  - A. Compromise – Local people near Jerusalem offered to help build the temple (4:1-3).
    1. The local Samaritans worshipped God but also idols (2 Kings 17:24-41)
      - Syncretism – Mixing God’s truth with error
    2. Zerubbabel rightly refused their help.
      - The source of opposition and false ideas – the world and Satan (1 John 2:15-16; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 10:4-5)
  - B. Fear – The Samaritans opposed them rebuilding the temple (4:4-5).
    1. Discouraged by threats creating fear (4:4)
    2. Bribes to influence *Cyrus* – 535 BC (4:5)
  - C. Lies – Parenthetical illustration of later opposition (4:6-23 – Ezra written about 445 BC).
    1. Later opposition – *Xerxes* – 486 BC (4:6)
    2. Later opposition – *Artaxerxes* – 464 BC (4:7-23).
  - D. The result of opposition – Temple rebuilding was halted 15 years until *Darius I* – 520 BC (4:24)
- II. Understanding the power of God’s word (Ezra 5:1)
  - God sent Haggai to urge the people to resume building (Ezra 5:1; Haggai 1:1).