

The Book of Ezra
Study #9
(Ezra 4:6-23)
Opposition: Part II

I. Opposition Under Ahasuerus (6)

II. Opposition Under Artaxerxes (7-23)

A. The Companions in the Letter (7-10)

1. The Samaritans (7; 2 Ch. 16:9; Zech. 4:10)
2. The Scribes (8)
3. The Signers (9-10)

B. The Content of the Letter (11-16)

1. Their Assurance (11)
2. Their Accusations (12-16)
 - a. The Present (12)
 - 1) The Character of the City
 - 2) The Construction of the City
 - b. The Past (15)
 - c. The Problems (13-14, 16)
 - 1) A Revenue Problem (13)
 - 2) A Respect Problem (14)
 - 3) A Rebellion Problem (16)

C. The Consideration of the Letter (17-20)

1. The Salutation (17)
2. The Search (18-20)
 - a. The Decree (18-19A)
 - b. The Discovery (19B-20)

D. The Consequences of the Letter (21-23)

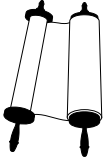
1. The King's Order Decreed (21-22)
2. The King's Order Delivered (23A)
3. The King's Order Demanded (23B)

CONCLUSION (Is. 12:2)

As soon as God starts to bless, the enemy starts to battle. Satan is a destroyer, and he gets angry when God's people unite to build. He has three favorite weapons.

1. Cooperation (1-3).
2. Intimidation (4-5).
3. Legislation (6-24).

But God was still at work! (Wiersbe, *With the Word*)



**THE CHRONOLOGY
OF EZRA 4**

4:6-23 In these verses, Ezra summarizes the entire story of the opposition to building the temple, the walls, and other important buildings in Jerusalem. Chronologically, Ezra 4:6 fits between Ezra 6 and Ezra 7; Ezra 4:7-23 refers to the events between Ezra 7 and Neh. 1. Ezra grouped them here to highlight the persistent opposition to God's people over the years and God's ability to overcome it. (*Life Application Bible*).

All this was the ongoing occurrence of severe animosity between the Israelites and Samaritans, which was later aggravated when the Samaritans built a rival temple on Mt. Gerizim (cf. John 4:9). The opposition to Zerubbabel picks up again at 4:24-5:2 during the reign of Darius I, who actually reigned before either Ahasuerus or Artaxerxes. (*MacArthur Study Bible*)

EZRA: OUTLINE

- I. Rebuilding the Place of God (Chapters 1-6)
(The Ministry of Zerubbabel)
 - A. The Return (Chapters 1-2)
 1. Proclamation of the Departure (1:1-4)
 2. Provision for the Departure (1:5-11)
 3. People of the Departure (Chapter 2)
 - B. The Rebuilding (Chapters 3-6)
 1. The Restoration of Worship (3:1-7)
 2. The Rebuilding of the Temple (3:8-6:22)
 - a. Commenced (3:8-13)
 - b. Contested (4:1-6:12)
 - 1) The Opposition (Ch. 4)
 - a) The 1st Opposition (4:1-5,24)
 - b) The 2nd Opposition (4:6-23)

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4:6 "wrote they ... an **accusation**" The word translated "accusation" means "a complaint." Satan, meaning "legal adversary" or "opponent," is a related term. (*The MacArthur Study Bible*)

4:7 **interpreted** = translated.

4:11,17 "and at **such a time**" - I.e., "and now."