

SERIOUS OPPOSITION ~ Ezra 4-5 (6:1-12)

→ Scripture Reading - Ezra 4:1, 4-5, 21-24

Screeching HALT ~ Ezra 4:1-5, 24

¹ The ENEMIES of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were rebuilding a Temple to the LORD, the God of Israel. ² So they approached Zerubbabel and the other leaders and said, "Let us build with you, for we worship your God just as you do. We have sacrificed to him ever since King Esarhaddon of Assyria brought us here." ³ But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the other leaders of Israel replied, "You may have no part in this work. We alone will build the Temple for the LORD, the God of Israel, just as King Cyrus of Persia commanded us." ⁴ Then the local residents tried to discourage and frighten the people of Judah to keep them from their work. ⁵ They bribed agents to work against them and to frustrate their plans. This went on during the entire reign of King Cyrus of Persia and lasted until King Darius of Persia took the throne. (NLT)

Israel's Enemies tried to... vs. 4-5

- Discourage them
- Frighten them
- Challenge them Politically
- Frustrate their plans

Vs. 24 is the NEXT verse chronologically following vs 5.

²⁴ So the work on the Temple of God in Jerusalem had STOPPED, and it remained at a standstill until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia. (NLT)

IMPLICATION

Hebrews 10:21-25 (NLT) ²¹ And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, ²² let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. ²⁴ Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. ²⁵ And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

WHEN we are Discourages...

- REFUSE to Give up
- Draw NEAR
- Hold on to HOPE
- Remember God is FAITHFUL
- SEEK to Encourage and Help
- INTENTIONALLY Seek those who are Hurting

Starting to BUILD Once More ~ Ezra 5:1-17

¹ At that time the prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem. They prophesied in the Name of the God of Israel who was over them. ² Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jehozadak responded by starting again to rebuild the Temple of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them and helped them. ³ But Tattenai, governor of the province west of the Euphrates River, and Shethar-bozenai and their colleagues soon arrived in Jerusalem and asked, "Who gave you permission to rebuild this Temple and restore this structure?" ⁴ They also asked for the names of all the men working on the Temple. ⁵ But because their God was watching over them, the leaders of the Jews were not prevented from building until a report was sent to Darius and he returned his decision. (NLT)

¹¹ ...We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the Temple that was built here many years ago by a great king of Israel. ¹² But because our ancestors angered the God of heaven, He abandoned them to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, who DESTROYED this Temple and EXILED the people to Babylonia. (NLT)

The DECREE of Darius ~ Ezra 6:1-12

⁶ So King Darius sent this message: "Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the province west of the Euphrates River, and Shethar-bozenai, and your colleagues and other officials west of the Euphrates River - STAY AWAY from there! ⁷ Do not Disturb the construction of the Temple of God. Let it be Rebuilt on its original site, and do NOT Hinder the governor of Judah and the elders of the Jews in their work. ⁸ "Moreover, I hereby decree that you are to HELP these elders of the Jews as they rebuild this Temple of God. You must pay the FULL construction costs, without delay, from my taxes collected in the province west of the Euphrates River so that the work will not be interrupted. ⁹ "Give the priests in Jerusalem whatever is needed in the way of young bulls, rams, and male lambs for the burnt offerings presented to the God of heaven. And without FAIL, provide them with as much wheat, salt, wine, and olive oil as they need each day. ¹⁰ Then they will be able to offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of heaven and Pray for the welfare of the king and his sons. ¹¹ Those who violate this decree in any way will have a beam pulled from their house. Then they will be lifted up and impaled on it, and their house will be reduced to a pile of rubble. ¹² May the God who has chosen the city of Jerusalem as the place to honor His Name destroy any king or nation that violates this command and destroys this Temple. I, Darius, have issued this decree. Let it be Obeyed with all Diligence. (NLT)

The Commands Darius Gave... (vs. 6-9,12)

- stay AWAY from them
- do NOT Interfere
- let them REBUILD
- PAY their Expenses
- Provide whatever is NEEDED for Sacrifices
- Do this with DILIGENCE

IMPLICATION

^{5:4} They also asked for the names of all the men working on the Temple. ⁵ BUT because their God was watching over them, the leaders of the Jews were not prevented from building until a report was sent to Darius and he returned his decision. (NLT)

Their God Was...

- **Personal** He belonged to them and they belonged to Him
- **Protecting** them
- **Preventing** any Interference of stoppage of work on the Temple

^{6:8} ...The expenses of these men are to be fully paid out of the royal treasury, from the revenues of Trans-Euphrates

TAKE AWAY ??

Philippians 4:8 (NLT) ...Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

Hebrews 12:2 (NIV) Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, SO THAT you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Colossians 3:2-3 (CSB) Set your minds on things above, NOT on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Jeremiah 29:13 (ESV) You will seek Me and FIND Me, WHEN you seek Me with ALL your heart.