

When Opposition Comes (Ezra 4)

Opposition can appear even when...

John 15:20-21; 1 Cor. 16:8-9...Ezra 4!

So how should we deal with this? Ezra 4-6

Ezra 4 (Part I): How opposition works

Ezra 5-6 (Part II): How God works in the face of opposition

The timeline of Ezra 4

<i>Verses</i>	<i>Persian king</i>	<i>Time of reign</i>
Ezra 4:1-5, 24	King Cyrus King Darius	(538-530BC) (522-486BC)
Ezra 4:6	King Xerxes (also known as Ahasuerus)	(485-464BC)
Ezra 4:7-23	King Artaxerxes	(464-423BC)

Why has the writer arranged his material this way?

1. When opposition comes, we might compromise (v.1-3)

A friendly offer (v.2)

A surprising rejection (v.3)

The right decision? (v.1, cf. 2 Kings 17:29-33)

A sharp line to be drawn

Application for us today

2. When opposition comes, we might get discouraged (v.4-5,24)

“weaken the hands”

One of Satan's favourite tools

- “You can't do what God wants you to do”
- “God doesn't do what you want him to do”
- Obstacle after obstacle

3. When opposition comes, we might be discredited (v.6-23)

The letter

How they speak

It works!

2 steps of preparation:

- Have realistic expectations
- Live by faith & don't give up